

# 10 THE INDEPENDENT

N° 3115

SATURDAY 12 OCTOBER 1996

WEATHER: Rain in the North, brighter in the South

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## Major: You're a liar, Mr Adams



Face to face: John Major tells Gerry Adams he does not believe him when he says the attack was nothing to do with him. Photographs: Reuter/Mirror Syndication

### I'm going to fight them in the streets

Edited extracts from John Major's Bournemouth speech

Throughout the last 17 years we have changed Britain. But not enough. There's still more to do – spreading choice, extending opportunity, there are ceaseless stakes.

The show goes on. The road goes on. It stretches far ahead. A good education, rewarding job security. That's what matters to millions of quiet, decent, home-loving families up and down the country. The people who care for their children work hard, save for old age, and are proud of this country. Alone, you cannot hear their soft voice. But collectively they speak for Britain. Our message is this.

I didn't come from two rooms in Brixton to Downing Street not to go out and fight with every fibre of my being for the things I believe in and the country I love. So come the election, where will I be? I'll be out in the towns and streets ... in marked squares and city centres

... I'll go round the country and speak face to face to as many people as I possibly can.

I'll talk about opportunity, opportunity for all. I'll tell them straight and I'll tell them true ... I will be the one talking to the people in the middle of the crowd. So come and join me and I promise you, we'll win.

I came into politics to open doors, not shut them. They were opened for me. I was born in the war. My father was 66. My mother was surprised.

We were like millions of others. Not well off, but comfortable, until the roof fell in ... It changed our life. My mother coped – as women do. I left school at 16, because an extra £5 a week mattered. I learnt from that experience. In the game of life, we Tories should even up the rules.

Giving people opportunity

marks the great divide in British politics. In its heart, Old Labour, New Labour, any old Labour, believes that government knows best. I don't.

Opportunity is the bloodstream of our party. It was Shaftesbury who gave an education to thousands of children from poor homes. It was Disraeli who gave many working men the freedom to vote. It was Salisbury who brought free education within the reach of almost every family in England. And it was Margaret Thatcher who sold council houses and public industries, giving people a real stake in this country.

I believe we should give families opportunity, and choice – and a wider, warmer view of life.

Our belief in choice is the driving force of our policy – it's not a political ploy, for me it is the

core of what I believe in. I start with education ... If parents want more grant-maintained schools – they shall have them. More specialist schools – we'll provide them. More selection – they'll have it ... And if parents want grammar schools in every town, well then so do I and they shall have them. We're aiming for the least possible tax to give the greatest possible choice. As we can afford it, we'll move to a 20p basic rate for all. That is our priority.

Dependency must be about needs, not a culture. I can't stand welfare cheats. They deprive those in real need.

Our NHS is unique. In this country, when you're ill, we take your temperature. In other countries, they take your credit card. While I'm in Downing Street that will never happen.

I'm the first Prime Minister

to come more flexible and responsive; that the only realistic future is as a partnership of nations, not a United States of Europe. We Conservatives are in grown-up politics. We know that where Britain's national interest is at stake Britain's national voice must be heard ... We must play a full part in that debate.

We believe Europe must become more flexible and responsive; that the only realistic

future is as a partnership of nations, not a United States of Europe. We know that where Britain's national interest is at stake Britain's national voice must be heard ... We must play a full part in that debate.

I believe this is practical. Nor, to

be frank, desirable. It is not the Europe we joined and it's not a Europe we can accept.

The Union Parliament. Our voting system. It is naive to think that radical change would be easy or risk-free. And it's revealing to look at Labour's plans. Their priority in the first year ... would be to gerrymander the British constitution.

They're avid for more parliaments, more assemblies, more regional assemblies. Their policy is in chaos. What a message.

"Vote Labour" – for more politicians, more bureaucrats, more taxes, more regulations, more tampering, more meddling, more authoritarianism.

If that is the New Gospel, then give me the old religion.

It's been the week the Tory

family came together – to renew

the family contract with the

British nation ... The well-

being of the Conservative Party

is more important than any individual

member of it.

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## Today, the sun will blaze darkly

Charles Arthur  
Science Editor

Today, the words "weather permitting" will matter a great deal. At 3.15pm, the best solar eclipse since 1961 should be visible across much of England and Wales. During today's partial eclipse, starting at about 1.50pm and ending at about 4.25pm, up to 60 per cent of the sun will be covered by the Moon's shadow passing over the Earth.

The worry is that cloudy

weather could spoil the event – or, conversely, that clear skies might tempt people to look directly at the sun. "It's the sun's ultra-red rays which do the

damage," said Duncan Copp of Mill Hill Observatory in London. "Nobody should look at the sun through any sort of optical instrument such as a telescope or pair of binoculars."

Even looking directly at the sun through improvised filters – like fogged photographic film, smoked-glass or a bin liner – is dangerous, as the heat will quickly burn your retina and damage will be permanent. The only safe way is to view the sun indirectly, through a pinhole camera, or else in a reflection such as a windscreen or paddle.

The most indirect view will be over the Internet, at the Society for Popular Astronomy's

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## Grammar school plans dropped

FRAN ABRAMS  
Education Correspondent

Ministers have backed away from plans to push through the introduction of new grammar schools, government officials admitted last night.

A leaked draft of the contents of a Bill to be published later this month shows that proposals to force discussions about full-scale selection whenever a new school is built have been dropped.

Gillian Shephard, the Secretary of State for Education, will

also have the right to step in and prevent schools from selecting a proportion of their pupils if it would leave some children without places.

Last night Labour accused Mrs Shephard of taking a "two-faced" approach, telling her party's conference that she was pressing on with plans for more grammar schools while quietly allowing her officials to water them down.

A spokesman for the Department for Education and Employment said officials would consult local communi-

ties on what kinds of schools they wanted.

"They will have to consider what's best in their view for the area ... Where the supply of school places is tight, selection could mean there would be some pupils who couldn't find a school place," he said.

A White Paper published in June said the agency which funds opt-out schools would be required to consider building grant-maintained grammar schools wherever extra places were needed. However, the measure is not mentioned in

provisional proposals for the new Bill, which have been passed to *The Independent*.

The provisional proposals do say, however, that all schools must consider the case for introducing selection every year, and that would-be grammar schools will have the "right of appeal" if their local authorities try to block them.

Mrs Shephard told delegates at her party's Bournemouth conference on Thursday that the government wanted to encourage more grammar schools "in response to parental demand".

But, last night, a teachers' union leader said surveys showed that most parents did not want more grammar schools.

Peter Smith, general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, said ministers had clearly realised that plans for a grammar school in every town would not be popular. "Parents won't be keen on it," he said. "It is a very low priority."

David Blunkett, Labour's education spokesman, said: "Gillian Shephard would appear to have been taking a two-faced approach. While assuring the Prime Minister that his plans for a grammar school in every town will be delivered, she has quietly got her officials to drop one of the key ways in which the Tories imagined that this might be delivered," he said.

A spokesman for the Funding Agency for Schools said it had asked parents for their views on selection when consulting on a new school in Epsom and Ewell, Surrey. It had been told emphatically that they were not interested.

**Labour MP dies of cancer**

Terry Patchett, Labour MP for Barnsley East, died yesterday after a long fight against cancer. Mr Patchett, 56, had a majority of almost 25,000. The Labour leader, Tony Blair, said: "Terry was the sort of MP on whom the Labour party has always depended." *Obituary*, page 16

**Post workers vote on strikes**

Postal workers will start voting today on whether to continue with the campaign of industrial action which led to mail deliveries being crippled in the summer.

**Anger at Dunblane gun homework**

Parents reacted furiously last night after a little girl who was shot and wounded during Thomas Hamilton's rampage at Dunblane came home with a colouring-in sheet depicting a gun.

Five-year-old Amy Hutchison, who was hit in the knee when Hamilton shot dead 16 of her Primary One classmates and their teacher, told her mother she did not want to touch the worksheet. It included a picture of a pistol and the letters G and N, with the middle letter to be filled in.

Amy's mother Veronica, 32, said: "I found it very distressing, and I didn't want anyone else upset. They're all shocked. I dread to think how the families who lost a child would feel if a brother or a sister brought this home," she said.

**Asians bank on secrecy**

A secret banking system used among Britain's Asian and Chinese communities is being used to launder "dirty" money from drugs and crime, a conference on financial fraud in Wakefield, West Yorkshire, was told yesterday. Police have uncovered a number of

criminals who use the process known as "Hawallah" to the Asians and "Chop-Chop" to the Chinese – to "clean" illegally obtained money. *Jason Bennett*

**Boycott to edit 'Independent on Sunday'**

Rosie Boycott, (above) the former editor of the British edition of *Esquire* magazine, has been named editor of the *Independent on Sunday*, becoming the first woman to edit a quality broadsheet. She replaces Peter Wilby.

Ms Boycott, who founded *Spanx*, said: "I have always admired the *Independent on Sunday*. It is a newspaper which values quality writing, the truth and integrity and has never sacrificed those principles."



Mute appeal: The Women Together peace rally outside Belfast City Hall yesterday, which included a minute's silence

Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

**Silent crowds  
gather by jaded  
symbol of peace**

JOJO MOYES  
Belfast

The wooden dove, held aloft on a stick above the word "Peace", had clearly seen better days. Its faded white feathers had been touched-up in places and the stick was bound round with old insulation tape. But was it possible to ignore.

It seemed tired, a little jaded as if, like the 2,000-strong crowd outside Belfast's City Hall yesterday, it had seen one peace rally too many.

Despite the high turn-out, and the uplifting singing of local children, yesterday's "Count The Cost" peace vigil, held under heavy grey skies, had a subdued air as news filtered through of the deaths of Darren Murray, 11, hit by a van during sectarian exchanges in Portadown, and Warrant Officer James Bradwell, a victim of the Lisburn bombings.

Nauala Noblett, chairwoman of Women Together, which had

organised the rally, said that the attack had been a "cruel, calculating act aimed at pushing us into the brink of civil unrest. We cannot lose hope although we have been truly tested."

During the half-hour vigil, the mixed crowd, which had congregated slowly from the city centre's shops and businesses, stood silently in the temporarily closed roads around the square while they heard the testimonies of three victims of sectarian violence.

Mark Kelly had lost both his legs at the age of 18, after a "no-warning" bomb was placed under his chair in a pub. Yvonne Cromie's son was 17 when he was shot dead in a sectarian "tit-for-tat" murder.

He suffered serious burns to up to 60 per cent of his body together with a skull fracture and other injuries.

Aged 43 and from Gateshead, he was married

with three children and had two grandchildren. He was on his first tour of duty in Northern Ireland with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers. He had served in the Army for 19 years, winning the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal for Exemplary Service.

His stepmother, Jean, said yesterday: "It is just two months since he was posted to Northern Ireland from Germany. We were worried about him but he reassured us when he phoned at the weekend."

WO Bradwell's father, Walter, 66, who lives near Sunderland, said: "It has come as horrible news and I feel bitter that this should have happened when we were all hoping that peace had come to Northern Ireland."

"I was very proud of Jim and his work as a soldier. He really loved the army – it was something he lived and breathed. But he had been looking forward to finishing in

a few years and starting a new life back in his home area and it is tragic that he should have been prevented from doing so in this way."

It was confirmed yesterday that some surveillance equipment at army headquarters was not working properly at the time of the bomb attacks. One of the closed-circuit cameras had either stopped running or had no tape in it.

WO Bradwell's death brought a fresh wave of condemnation of the bombings. Extending sympathy to his family, the Taoiseach, John Bruton, demanded of the IRA: "If there is a new ceasefire it will be just a conditional ceasefire like the last one or will it hold in all circumstances? That is the question that the republican movement must now answer."

David Trimble's Ulster Unionist Party said the soldier's death underlined the fact that Sinn Fein and the IRA had excluded themselves from political talks.

**Rabies killed teenager**

The teenager who contracted rabies while in Nigeria died of the disease, a coroner said yesterday. The 19-year-old Nigerian who has not been named, died at Coppetts Wood Hospital in north London. An inquest will open next Friday.

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# Major guns for the self-helpers

ANTHONY BEVINS  
Political Editor

A concerted election campaign effort to undermine public trust in Tony Blair was opened up by John Major yesterday. In repeated attacks on the Labour leader, Mr Major patronised his opponent as "young Mr Blair", a man who had never done a "real job" in his life, and accused him of using the language of crusade, dream and substance as a cover for lack of substance.

"At the election," Mr Major told a jam-packed conference at Bournemouth, "there's a central question. It's this: who can best be trusted with the future?"

Labour had tried to persuade people that they were the ones to be trusted because they had changed. But Mr Major said: "It simply won't do for Mr Blair to say, 'Look, I'm not a socialist any more. Now can I be Prime Minister, please? Sorry, Tony, the job's taken.'

But Mr Major's effervescent self-confidence – lapped up by the conference with the traditional ovation and repeated choruses of *Land of Hope and Glory* – was backed up by a package of well-trailed policy measures designed to trump Mr Blair's five core policy pledges.

John Prescott, Labour's deputy leader, said last night: "Just like every other speech in Bournemouth, John Major has nothing new to say. It was just the same old story, fake unity and crude attacks on Tony Blair. No one will be impressed."

Nevertheless, Mr Major and the Tory media machine were keen to promote a continuing commitment to an annual, real-term increase in spending on hospitals, and a reaffirmation of old plans to recreate cottage



Know your demon: a participant at the Conservative's conference shows where danger lies with a Tony Blair mask

hospitals through an expansion of local doctors' surgeries.

On law and order, Mr Major offered an attack on truancy, and announced experimental plans to put electronic tags on "young tearaways", imposing curfews on offenders aged from 10 to 15 years. "If we know a young trouble-maker is out there, night after night, disturbing the peace and commit-

ting crimes, we'll make sure the courts have the power to order him to stay put. At home, and off the streets," he said.

As for education, Mr Major repeated that the Tories would offer more choice, with more grant-maintained schools, specialist schools and selection. If parents wanted them, grammar schools in every town, too.

Turning to work and welfare, Mr Major said that people must

accept responsibility for themselves. "Dependency must be about needs, not a culture," he told the conference. "I can't stand the welfare cheats. I'll tell you why. They deprive those in real need."

"We're determined that taxpayers' money goes where it's needed. Our task is to build a welfare system for the 21st century. A system for a self-help

Photograph: David Rose

society – not a system for a help-yourself society."

Last night, as he left the Bournemouth conference to the applause of lingering representatives, Mr Major said that the week's successful conference had confounded the doom-mongers. "This is a conference of a party that's going to win," he said. "And everybody here knows it."

## Tired party does its best to varnish over the cracks

COLIN BROWN  
Chief Political Correspondent

Tory grass-roots supporters left Bournemouth yesterday declaring that they were more united and that John Major had renewed their will to fight the general election.

"I am motivated. I will be out canvassing and knocking," said Bobbie Jones, chairwoman of the Eastleigh Tories, who is fighting to regain the seat lost to the Liberal Democrats in a by-election after the death of the Tory MP Stephen Milligan in a bizarre sex act...

Dame Margaret Hodge, Labour's MP for Bury St Edmunds, was achieved by a barrage of policy announcements. Ten years later, the Government looks tired – the announcements of the past week were stocktaking measures for the last Queen's Speech of the Parliament.

"I have been working for the party for 50 years, and this

will go down as one of our greatest conferences. We are going back to our constituents with even greater enthusiasm."

But do annual party conferences make any difference in the long run?

It is in seats like theirs that the 1997 general election will be won or lost. In 1986 – in the last election the Conservative was launched – the Tories arrived in Bournemouth looking demoralised after a successful Labour conference. They left fizzing with ideas, and went on to win a third term under Margaret Thatcher.

The turn-around was achieved by a barrage of policy announcements. Ten years later, the Government looks tired – the announcements of the past week were stocktaking measures for the last Queen's Speech of the Parliament.

After 17 years in office, party strategists are less interested

in presenting the Conservatives as Maoists, committed to cooptious revolution. The main item on the agenda this week was unity.

Baroness Thatcher set the tone by giving her successor her unequivocal backing with the order to their supporters: "Stop the talking – let's get cracking." Mr Major's platform kiss for Lady Thatcher became the motif for the week. The Prime Minister's gesture of support for his Chancellor – holding hands – was another. The message to the Euro-sceptics was clear: I am backing Clarke and there will be no change of policy on Europe this side of a general election.

Former minister Robert Hughes, one of Mr Major's campaign allies, said yesterday: "The turning-point was the Chancellor's speech, because he put to the conference two messages they did not want

to hear – continuing the policy on Europe, and damping down expectations on tax cuts."

Mr Major sought to contrast his own dogged style with Tony Blair's slickness. Michael Portillo – one of the Cabinet Eurosceptics who led the calls for unity this week – said: "His sincerity oozed out of his speech."

The Major speechwriters have no need for the playwright Sir Ronald Miller, who supplied the best lines for Margaret Thatcher. A Miller thriller, called *The Coat of Varnish* will be playing at the end of the pier in Bournemouth next week.

Bournemouth and Mr Major's speech have given the Tories a fighting chance. But if Mr Clarke fails to deliver some cuts in taxes in his Budget in a few weeks' time, the gloss over the new show of unity in the Tory Party will peel before Christmas.

## Tinker? No thanks, we'd rather settle down and light the Aga

It had said the party official to the masses, been a very successful conference. "And why," he asked, "has it been so successful?" Unity? John Major? A Labour-smashing performance? No. "Because it has been chaired by Dame Hazel Byford."

And he was absolutely right. I do not really know who Dame Hazel is, but I have a mental image of her, and if it's accurate then this week was, in a very real sense, the triumph of the Dame Hazel Byfords; the victory of conservatism over right radicalism, of getting by over crusading of twits over armour.

Indeed, Dame Hazel and her pals met the disciples of



DAVID AARONOVITCH

Newt Gingrich and overcame.

During the Prime Minister's Hazely speech – holding a copy in my hand – I walked along the empty corridors of the Conference Centre, and his flat, declamatory tones would waft up to me from occasional ventilation shafts, or from around corners.

And this is what he said, more or less. "Once we were radicals. But those times have gone. It is time to stop tinkering with things, time to settle down, to play golf, set up a sports academy and carry on carrying on. Not for us passion, not for us desire, not for us dangerous dreams of altered states. We come in the age of Joanna Trollope and Colin Cowdrey. Agas and untempered balls."

"Now we will conserve. Conserve the union, conserve our institutions (we've destroyed the ones we didn't like), conserve the health service, but more than anything else – in order to conserve everything else – we must conserve us."

Is this realistic? It does seem to entail spending a lot more public money, while cutting taxes at the same time – a return to the good old Byfordian days of stop-go. But then things are often contradictory.

This was the PM on parental choice on education: "More selection? They'll have it. Why should governments say no, if parents think it's right for their children?" But selection is not about parental choice. All parents would choose to be selected, but only a few can be.

You see, John and Hazel, the two principles are fundamentally antagonistic. And sooner rather than later people are going to find this out.

His eyes narrowed as he waited for the European ship to come in. And what, Dame Hazel Byford, are you going to do when it does?

Woolworths has learned of a potential fault in a side winding can opener which under certain circumstances could cause cans to splinter when being opened.

In the interest of customer safety and as a precautionary measure the can opener has been withdrawn from sale in all Woolworths stores.

Any customer who has purchased this product since May 1996 should return it to their nearest store, where a full refund will be given. A receipt is not necessary.



Surviving on the poverty line. Page 8

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### WEEK AT THE CONFERENCE

#### MAIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

£12 billion expansion of welfare for 1.65m year unemployed;  
A Finance Bill enabling cross-checking of tax returns, VAT returns, and benefit claims;  
Electronic tagging for young offenders;  
Power for judges to shame young offenders by naming them;  
Renewal of manifesto commitment to increase spending on the NHS in real terms every year for the next Parliament;  
Bill to allow consumers to sue unions for unreasonable damage caused by strikes;  
£200m extra support for beef farmers and £250m extra to pay for cold storage of beef to help clear surplus backlog;  
£300 million per year millennium funds from lottery to go on community networks after turn of the century.

#### QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"Stop the talking – let's get cracking" Lady Thatcher.  
"If we throw away the next election, we won't just throw away the last 12." John Major.  
"A terrible conference – in order to win we need three-point policies: unity, unity and unity." Michael Portillo.  
"Let me be frank – if you want Labour in power, just go on behaving the way Labour behaved. That kept them in opposition for 27 years." Michael Heseltine.

GOOD WEEK... BAD WEEK DEVIL OF THE WEEK



John Major

A brazen mid-week performance in question and answer session, and keynote speech shown of his persona non grata after collapse of his "sleaze row" libel action on the first day of the conference.

#### FASHION STATEMENT

John Major's decision to take his jacket off during a question and answer session, prompting Labour to claim Tony Blair did it society – not a system for a help-yourself society."

#### JOKES OF THE WEEK

Gordon Brown bases his policies on the Dolly Parton school of economics – an unbelievable figure blown out of all proportion (Ken Clarke). Author: Angela Knight, junior Treasury minister

RAPTUREMETER READINGS OF THE WEEK

John Major 92 decibels rising to 98 when he attacked Gerry Adams

Kenneth Clarke 94 decibels

Michael Portillo 90 decibels

Compiled by COLIN BROWN

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**Dixons** *There's a great deal going on*

news

# Election according to Mondeo man

Redditch may not seem a fashionable town, but for the election strategists it is a critical battleground.

This new constituency, carved out of mid-Worcestershire, has a notional Conservative majority of 3,000, and Labour needs a swing of just over 3 per cent to take a seat they must win if they are to have a realistic chance of forming the next government.

In the 1992 local elections, Conservatives polled 48.07 per cent of the vote in local elections; Labour 41.95 per cent and the Liberal Democrats just under 10 per cent. This May, Labour gained 55 per cent against only 26 per cent for the Conservatives.

The tree-lined wards of Matchborough and Wivates are crucial areas filled with many of the skilled workers the parties are fighting over.

This is where *The Independent* panel live in their own houses, owning decent cars and holding down good jobs.

Some are already lost to the Tories, it seems. The memory of unemployment, perceived health cuts and once-high interest rates are still too strong. Education, too, is seen as a key factor, but Europe was hardly mentioned as an issue.

Mark Redfern, 29, is an engineer, married with his own semi-detached house. Unlike Tony Blair's Midlands voter of 1992 - whose decision to vote Tory convinced the current leader that that poll was lost - he drives a Ford Granada. He has always voted Tory and describes himself as "one of Thatcher's children", but will not vote Conservative next time.

"I cannot afford to be a Tory any more, they are taxing me to the hilt."

"My wife, Jane, is expecting again and is having to give up her job because we can't afford the child care."

Mr Redfern says he is impressed by Mr Blair and is prepared to give him his vote.

Indeed, none of the 12, all Conservative sympathisers in the past, say they are sure they will vote for John Major next time.

Sierra owner, Adrian Blick, a 30-year-old self-employed builder, will also switch his vote to Labour.

During the recession, he almost lost his home and the pressure caused him and his then fiancée to split.

"I feel let down by the

This conference season, the political parties have been concentrating on a relatively small number of middle-class, middle-England voters whom they believe will decide who wins the next

election. Tony Blair told the story of how in 1992 he met a Midlands man washing his Sierra who convinced him that Labour was no longer the party of the aspirational classes. These days,

they are as likely to be Mondeo man, or Granada woman, but are they convinced by Blair's New Labour party?

Michael Streeter went to Redditch to meet the Mondeo people who will form

*The Independent's* election panel. We shall return to them again as the General Election approaches to see how they respond to each of the politicians.

whom she applauds for distancing the party from the unions.

Susan Lovett, 38, a former sales consultant with two children, lives in a smart house and drives a Ford Granada. A Tory voter in 1992, now she is not so sure and regards Mr Major as "too weak".

However, she's unpersuaded yet that Mr Blair can produce the concrete policies on education, the NHS, law and order and Europe that she wants. If he does not, she will "probably" vote Conservative again.

Toolmaker Andrew Osciak, 45, also sees crime as a big issue. After giving Mr Major his vote last time, he says he is now in two minds. But neither is he impressed by Mr Blair, whom he feels has not been positive enough to persuade him to vote Labour, as he once did in the past.

Steven Marriott, 28, a radio frequency engineer, who drives a Montego, says he would have voted for Margaret Thatcher had he been old enough, but voted Liberal Democrat at protest at the last election.

A period of unemployment and time spent on training schemes of "no benefit" turned him away from Mr Major, whom he regards as too weak. But he's also worried that Labour may have a hidden agenda and would prefer Mr Blair to be "more honest" about his intentions on taxation and the economy.

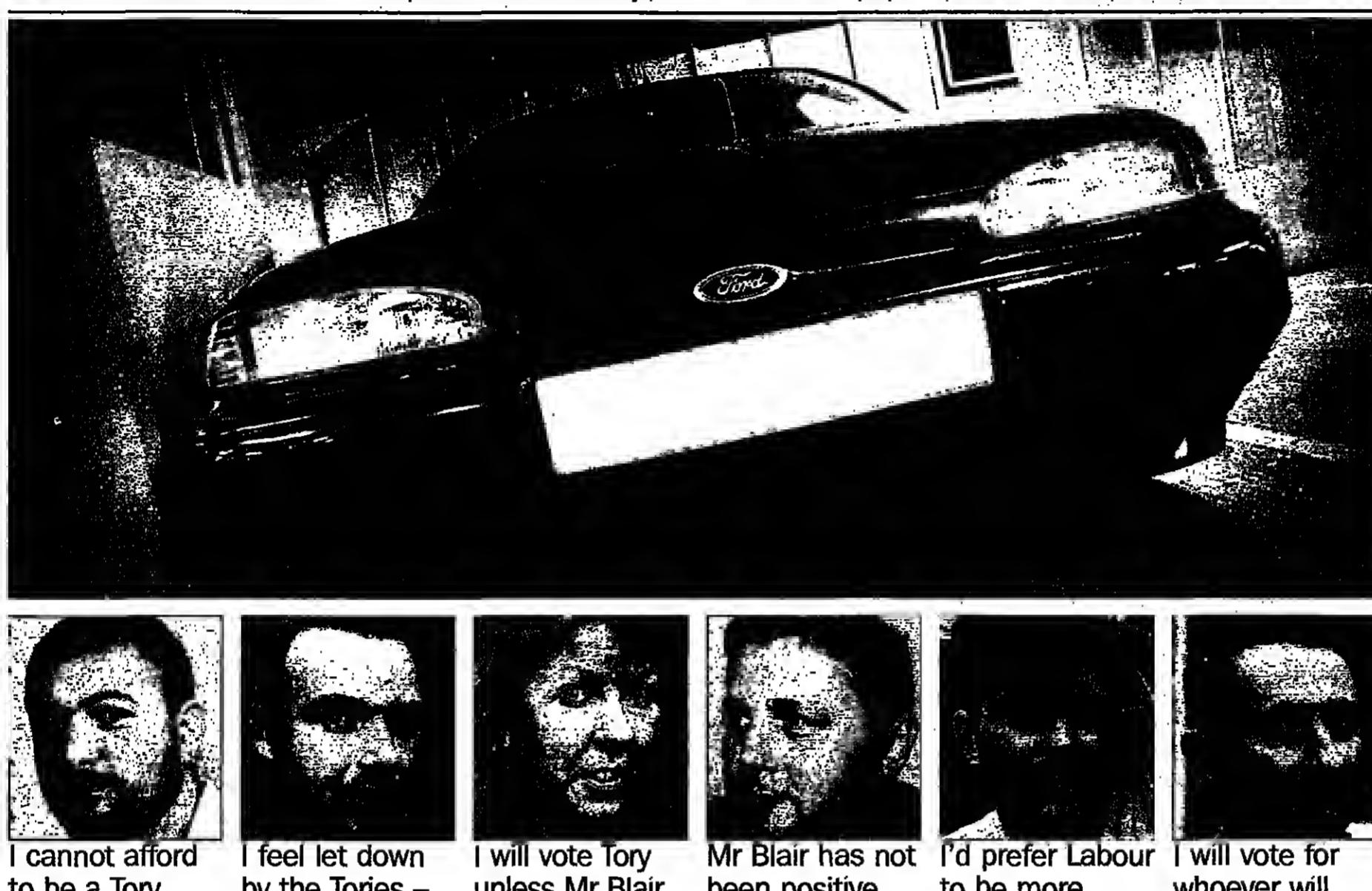
Paramedic Lionel Baird, 52, drives a Renault 19, does not know if he will vote Tory again and is worried about the investments he's made to safeguard his future. Mr Baird is unhappy at the state of the NHS and believes that Mr Blair has modernised the Labour Party, but says in the end he will vote for whoever will best secure economic growth and stability.

The Liberal Democrats also won plaudits from our group, but many view them as too weak and unlikely to form the next government.

As the views of those above and the rest of the panel change, *The Independent* will bring them to you, in the run-up to an election which will determine the British government for the next millennium.

The message so far is clear: while many may not vote Tory again, Mr Blair's New Labour is not guaranteed their vote either.

The battle has begun.



I cannot afford to be a Tory, they are taxing me to the hilt  
**Mark Redfern**

I feel let down by the Tories - the country needs a change  
**Adrian Blick**

I will vote Tory unless Mr Blair can produce concrete policies  
**Susan Lovett**

Mr Blair has not been positive enough to make me vote Labour  
**Andrew Osciak**

I'd prefer Labour to be more honest on tax and economy  
**Andrew Osciak**

I will vote for whoever will secure growth in the economy  
**Steven Marriott**

Tories," he says. Although not personally keen on New Labour, Mr Blick thinks the country needs a change. "I would rather pay slightly higher taxes to know there will be a bed for me in the hospital.

Dense Sparks, a dressmaker who has two young children and owns a Nissan Micra, is angry with the Tories, for whom she voted in 1992, but is not sure that she will vote for Mr Blair.

Ms Sparks wants to hear more definite policies, first on the areas she feels most strongly about - health and education, recurring themes among *The Independent* dozen.

She liked Mr Major's conference speech but along with most of the group, says she is not really influenced by party conferences and is more interested in detailed policy.

One definite defector to Labour is Linda Middleton, 41, who works in a supermarket and owns her own Ford car.

One of her sons has just gone to university and she feels students get less now than ever before. She adds: "What is happening to the NHS is also terrifying."

She could not have voted for Neil Kinnock's Old Labour, like John Smith's the best, but will still vote for Mr Blair,

"They are just beauty parades, just for show," she says.

before. She adds: "What is happening to the NHS is also terrifying."

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# "Not for the ordinary"



John Paul and Eloise

**L**uxury is a discovery, not only for the rich. It says things about those who create it and those who recognise the difference. Do you enjoy something special?

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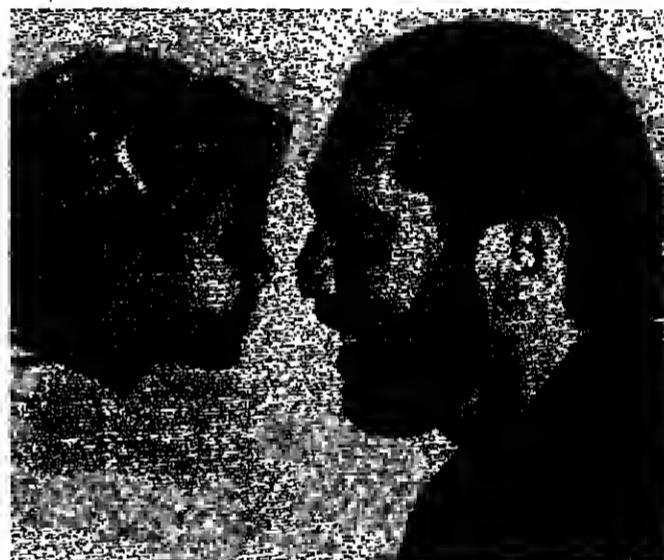
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John Paul and Eloise

Divided society: Commission finds 14 million Britons earn half the national average wage and calls for cap on highest salaries



On the headline: Single parent, Annie Oliver and her son, Alex: "You have no choice, you just have to survive"

Photograph: Christopher Jones

# 'Maximum wage will end poverty trap'

GLENDA COOPER

"There aren't such things as sacrifices when you are a single parent. You have no choice," said Annie Oliver, who brings up her five-year-old son, Alex, by herself. "There are no conscious decisions 'I'll do that or I won't', will it be lean mince or fatty mince, M&S or 'Tesco'?"

Ms Oliver is one of 14 million people in Britain whom the Channel 4 Poverty Commission say are living in poverty. Until recently, she and Alex lived on benefits of £80.10 a week. In a good week, when there were no bills, she could afford to spend

up to £30 a week on food; in a bad week, it might be £8.

Ms Oliver looked for a job and when unemployed did voluntary work. The Channel 4 Poverty Commission believes that more people like her could get into work if a "maximum wage" was imposed to cap levels of high-earning employees.

White has been made of the idea of a statutory minimum wage — currently suggested at £4.26 an hour — the group say that by also imposing a maximum wage, more people could be employed on better wages. Tackling poverty would also make the well-off up to £55 a week better off, it claimed, through reducing the benefits bill and the costs of crime.

The commission, which travelled around the country for four months interviewing more than 100 people, found that 14 million people in Britain now have incomes of less than half the national average and the number increased very rapidly during the 1980s and 1990s.

Low wages were said to be the single most important cause of poverty in the UK, with one-third of those suffering from poverty in households where one person is working. More than 60 per cent of full-time workers earn less than male average earnings of £375 a week.

The commission called for the highest-paid employee in a company to be paid no more than 10-25 times the wage of the lowest-paid. This has worked admirably in companies such as John Lewis, it said.

"We found companies where

the highest-paid was getting 15 times the lowest wage," said Professor Peter Townsend, chairman of the commission. "If the pattern [of wages] becomes excessively unequal, it can lead to a reduction in the number employed at the lower levels of pay, and the amount they are paid to fund those at the higher levels."

The group also commissioned research measuring the costs of poverty to the richest 75 per cent of the population — those on more than half the national average income. "This was not to show that the poor are a burden on society, but to highlight the financial self-interest the well-off have in reducing poverty," said the report.

The research found that the cost of unemployment was as high as £19.45bn [benefit paid plus the amount the government loses in taxes because someone is not in work]; means-tested income support cost £13.02bn and crime, £15.06bn [studies show that between 40 and 70 per cent of reported crime is committed by young, unemployed men].

The commission suggested an increase in funding for schemes to help recently released prisoners back into work and housing to try to combat reoffending, more opportunities for further education and more money should be made available for good, affordable public housing. National Lottery money could be used for such projects. *The Great, The Good, and the Dispossessed, tonight on Channel 4 at 7.05pm.*

## US scientists link abortion to breast cancer

LIZ HUNT

Health Editor

A single abortion can significantly increase the chances of a woman developing breast cancer, according to American scientists, who claim that there has been a deliberate attempt to conceal the risk for more than 40 years.

Professor Joel Brind, from the City University of New York, and his colleagues say that although the increase in risk is low, it may account for thousands of cases of breast cancer — almost 25,000 in the US.

And they warn of a "potentially greater impact in the next century, as the first cohort of women exposed to legal induced abortion continues to age."

The scientists, who analysed data from 28 published studies to reach an overview of the link between abortion and breast cancer, say women who are having an abortion should be told of the breast-cancer link.

They suggest that the surge in the levels of the hormone oestrogen in the first trimester of pregnancy is the most likely mechanism for increasing breast-cancer risk in a woman who subsequently undergoes a termination.

However, British experts reacted swiftly yesterday to allay alarm and downplay the findings of the study, published in the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*. Margaret Gilchik, a consultant breast surgeon at St Mary's Hospital in London, said she was unaware

of any link. "I am surprised," she said, "because, statistically, the person who has had a termination is more likely to have had an early pregnancy, which is a known protective factor against the disease."

Ann Furedi, director of the Birth Control Trust, said the findings should be treated with caution, and denied that the risk had been ignored by doctors.

"Even going by this paper, the risk is very small," she said. "It shows that the risk of breast cancer might be increased by about a third after an abortion, which has to be put in perspective."

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Every Saturday in this Newspaper

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## news



Fine cut: Ready-to-wear designs by Emanuel Ungaro (left and right) and Karl Lagerfeld (centre) at the Paris fashion show yesterday. Photograph: Reuters/Ben Elwes

# R.E.M.

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Mojo

# Child sex tour agent jailed for 16 years

## LOUISE JURY

A British travel agent was jailed in the Philippines for 16 years yesterday for promoting sex tours with children as young as 12.

Michael Clarke, 50, from Eastbourne, Sussex, became the first foreigner to be convicted of inducing child prostitution since a campaign against the illegal trade was launched by President Fidel Ramos last year.

The successful prosecution,

secured with the help of British campaigners, prompted calls for more police resources to investigate sex offences committed by Britons against children overseas.

Danny Smith, director of the campaigning charity Jubilee, said: "Tough action by governments, including the British, is imperative to bring justice to abusers and to save more children from exploitation."

The court in Olongapo heard how Clarke distributed a brochure in London promoting an adult tour package which included a drive to "Sin City" - Olongapo - and the "OK Coral" where "dozens of headstrong young fillies are tethered". Clients were told they could "choose (their) mount".

He also published posters

promoting his Paradise Express business showing boys and girls in sexually provocative poses and promising "outrageous happenings". And he placed advertisements in *Exchange and Mart*.

He was caught when Martin Cottingham, of the charity

Christian Aid, posed as a client and ITN secretly filmed meetings. Mr Cottingham told the court that Clarke offered him sex with a child prostitute and advised him to take a camera, video recorder and "fetish gear" with him on his holiday. Another witness told how Clarke claimed sex with a 12-year-old girl cost only as much as a hamburger.

Sentencing him yesterday, Judge Fatima Asdala said: "This act of promising sex with the young ... in the guise of promoting tourism is considered by this court to be debasing of Filipino women and children."

She ordered that after serving his sentence, Clarke should be deported and banned from the Philippines for the rest of his life. The travel agent slumped to his seat as her verdict was read to the court.

He had vehemently denied

any offence and claimed he had been set up. As prison guards led him away from the courtroom, he told reporters: "I am completely innocent of the charge - a fabrication. It's diabolical - I've suffered enough."

Members of the Coalition on Child Prostitution and Tourism, which includes the NSPCC and Anti-Slavery International charities, welcomed Clarke's jailing.

Mr Cottingham said: "I hope this verdict makes more British men think twice about travelling to poorer countries to exploit children sexually."

Tough new penalties, with a maximum sentence of life imprisonment, were introduced in Britain at the beginning of the month aimed at punishing the organisers of child sex tours.



Michael Clarke: Invited clients to 'choose their mount'

## Stab-case youth accuses boy

The teenager alleged to have murdered headmaster Philip Lawrence accused another boy of the stabbing yesterday.

He said the boy borrowed his coat and cap to disguise himself during a confrontation outside St George's Roman Catholic Comprehensive School, north-west London. As people were running and screaming, the teenager said, he saw the other boy "punch" Mr Lawrence sideways. He was still wearing my coat - the hood was up. He had a scarf across his face. He started walking towards me. He was waiting for him - he got pretty close to me. I saw a knife in his hand. He said he had stabbed a teacher in the heart. He did not seem at all panicky. I saw the blade - it did not appear to have blood on it."

The teenager, who was not a St George's pupil, was testifying in his defence. He has denied

murdering Lawrence last December.

He denied carrying a weapon and said he went to the school at the request of the other boy - a Filipino - because "some black boys were picking on them. It had happened a few times. They were getting picked on because they were Filipino".

The other boy, who had a tattooed hand, asked for his clothing, saying there were teachers around and he needed a disguise. He saw the tattooed boy run off after the stabbing. "I saw him throw the knife in the middle of the road. He still had my coat on." He said that when he caught up with others in his group, he told them a teacher had been stabbed "because of what the other boy told me".

Asked by his counsel, David Spens, QC, why he later told an acquaintance he had done the stabbing, the teenager said: "I was boasting." He told him he saw blood "to make it sound more exciting". It had not been true, he told the court.

## WOOLWORTHS

### Product Recall Notice

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Woolworths has learned of a potential fault in its 5 Piece Non-Stick Cookware Set which under certain circumstances could affect the handle security. In the interests of customer safety and as a precautionary measure the Cookware Set has been withdrawn from sale in all Woolworths stores.

Any customer who has purchased this product since February, 1996 should return it to their nearest store where a full refund will be given. A receipt is not necessary.

Jeff in Asia

الآن من الممكن



WORLWORTHES

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# 'Mummy, the Serb says we must take our beds out now'

Dubrava, Serb-controlled northern Bosnia - Fatima Mehic was telling me that she feared for her home, when the door burst open and her illiterate son Rasim rushed into the room. "Mummy," he said. "The Serb says we must take our beds out of the attic now." Rasim swayed on his feet, hungry and cold, as frightened as his mother and sick father Fakhrudin. They had all seen the document from the Serb authorities, informing Savo Ponjevic that he and his Serb refugee family from Dorni Vakuf could have the "use" of Fatima's family home. This was ethnic cleansing post-Dayton style.

Fatima, her tired face framed by gaunt dark hair, wrung her hands in rage and anxiety, wiping away tears with her fingers. "I've no income of any kind - we only get food from the humanitarian organisations and my son and daughter can't go to school," she wept. "This house was my grandfather's and I grew up here. Now it is legally owned by my nephew who is in Germany. When the Serb family arrived as refugees, I welcomed them - I told them, 'I was a refugee too - I know how you feel.' I let them have the downstairs rooms and two of the four attic rooms. Then they told me they wanted me out of the house altogether. And now they say I can't even live in the outhouse."

A Muslim refugee herself, from the front lines at Derventa - her own house there was destroyed - Fatima moved to the old family home in Dubrava in 1992, aware that the Serb authorities were murdering and driving Muslims from their homes in northern Bosnia but declaring repeatedly that she accepted the idea of living in the "Serb Republic". Her fragile security remained intact until, just under a month ago, she heard

**BACK TO BOSNIA**  
A new ethnic cleansing is in use now, Robert Fisk says in his series on life a year after the ceasefire

better than this house," he shouted. "My wife and three children and I were forced to wander from town to town. I moved to this house because the owner was not here. The Muslim woman is a relative of the owner but I have been living here for a year now. That woman comes from Derventa. Let her go back there and rebuild her old home. If I could go back to my home in Dorni Vakuf, I would walk there barefoot." But Fatima's home in Derventa is destroyed, I said. "Then let her rebuild it," Savo boomed back. He was shaking with anger now, his eyes as grey as lead. Savo slammed the paper on to the table in front of me. Signed by a Serb official, it says that Fatima's home - lot number 713/1 - was now given to Savo's family "to use along with all the movable property which they find in the above stated residence". "The home I owned in Dorni Vakuf belongs now to a Muslim called Radmanovic," Savo roared. "Now this house is mine. The war hasn't ended for me - my children have no future."

Outside, a clutch of United Nations officials and international policemen arrived, observers under the Dayton accord who are doing their best to shame the Serbs into leaving the 2,000 surviving Muslims of Dubrava alone. It is true that the Serb authorities gave Fatima a letter saying she could stay in the outhouse. Much good did it do her. When I knocked on Savo's front door - the door of Fatima's family home - I was met by a proud, angry man whose voice, once we had sat down, grew so loud in fury that it vibrated on the coffee table in front of us. He immediately produced his own official Serb document which was as uncompromising as his own lack of pity for Fatima.

"I bought my home in Dorni Vakuf with my own money and the Muslims took it and it was



Bosnians watch Americans destroying ammunition yesterday. Photograph: Reuter

am divided from this woman. It is the Serb authorities who are to blame. It is this piece of paper that is dividing us."

It was an extraordinary statement. Savo had lived under communism for 35 years and now he still blamed the authorities for his very own act of appropriation. On the upstairs balcony of "his" home there now hung a Serb flag. Fatima was outside, talking to the UN men.

"I was born here and I was in an overgrown field. This place was once a German settlement and a German built that in 1922. He was thrown out in 1945. Then others came and they were thrown out over the years. No one was ever happy there and no one will live there now. The Serbs in Fatima's house should remember an old Bosnian saying. 'That which was taken by force is cursed.'"

On Monday, Robert Fisk reports on a mass grave at Sanski Most.

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BY ROBERT FISK, THE INDEPENDENT'S SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

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# Kenyans fear satanism charges mask witch-hunt

DAVID ORR and ILONA EVELINE Nairobi

Kenya is in the grip of satanism hysteria, with none other than President Daniel arap Moi leading the field. Human sacrifice, cannibalism and the satanic abuse of children are widespread in Kenya, according to a report commissioned by the President.

So sensitive are its findings, says President Moi, that it is impossible for the government to publish the document. Some opposition politicians are suggesting the only reason the government is refusing to publish the report is because members of the Kama ruling party are themselves involved.

The Presidential Inquiry into the Cult of Devil Worship was set up a year ago. Represented on it are many of Kenya's leading church figures. "Owing to the sensitive nature of the information contained in the report and the legal implications of some of the findings, it is not appropriate for the government to make the findings public," said President Moi. However, many opposition members fear the satanism issue will become a pretext for a witch-hunt against them in the run-up to next year's general elections.

"He is getting ready to release selected parts of the report to discredit individual politicians," Paul Muite, a Kikuyu MP, told *The Independent* yesterday. "I have no doubt that I'm one of the people he's got to get. Satanism is a phantom, but in such a Christian country as ours this ploy could have a devastating impact on the opposition."

Mr Muite is, along with activist Richard Leakey, a founding member of the Safina movement which the government has refused to register as a political party. Mr Muite and other opposition politicians have called on the government to make the findings of the commission public. "The only reason the government doesn't

want to publish the report must be because many of its leading members are involved," said Ford Asili M. Philip Gitonga. "I believe this could go right up to President Moi himself."

The Kenyan press frequently reports cases of witchcraft and demonic possession. In recent weeks letters have appeared in newspapers calling on the authorities to cleanse the country of "all devilish elements".

"There is a strong chance that all this might be misinterpreted and people take justice into their own hands," said Professor G.M.



Ogutu, head of religious studies at the University of Nairobi.

According to Kenya's *East African Standard*, the presidential commission has received information on such satanic practices as the kidnapping of children, rape, sexual abuse, murder and the ritual use of body parts in black masses.

"There's no doubt that devil worship is getting worse and the ones involved are the big shots," said Fr Ndikuru wa Tengendo, a Catholic priest in the town of Thika. "People who come to me for counselling say they are being offered large sums of money to attend satanic ceremonies. They have human and blood sacrifices at these rituals. I have good evidence that high-ranking politicians are involved and that they do these things to achieve their political ends."

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# Malan cleared in KwaZulu massacre trial

MARY BRAID  
Durban

Magnus Malan, former South African defence minister, and four other apartheid-era generals walked free from a court here yesterday cleared, after a seven-month trial, of murder and conspiracy charges.

Tim McNally, the KwaZulu-Natal Attorney general, failed to link the generals, the most senior members of the old regime to be charged with atrocities, and other security-force members, with six Zulu Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) cadres in the 1987 massacre of 13 people during a prayer meeting in KwaMakutha, a village south of Durban.

General Malan, one of the apartheid era's most hated figures, who called his first appearance in court a dark day for democracy, said the verdict was a triumph for justice.

Tiene Grotewald, former chief director of military intelligence, who had charges against him dismissed during the trial, said the acquittals vindicated the South African Defence Force (SADF) and hoped they would mark an end to "political trials".

Standing in a corner of the court grounds while the generals' families and IFP supporters celebrated, Mbisi Ntuli, 24, who lost three sisters - aged seven, 14 and 16 - and his father in the KwaMakutha massacre, said he and his mother Anna

were disappointed. Like many, he believes the courts and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which encourages perpetrators of injustices to confess in return for amnesty, are failing to expose the truth or the guilty people.

"We are bitter but we expected this verdict," said Mr Ntuli, whose brother Victor, an ANC activist, was the intended target of the 1987 attack.

"Those who died were innocent children who knew nothing of the struggle. They were murdered, yet it seems no one killed them."

Mr McNally said that while IFP supporters had perpetrated the massacre, Gen Malan and the other officers were also responsible because they had provided training for the men, among 200 IFP supporters recruited to "Operation Maronette", a secret SADF project to create an IFP military force which would combat the ANC in KwaZulu.

The three main witnesses - Maronette recruits who turned state's evidence in return for indemnity - were rejected as unreliable by Judge Jan Hugo. He also ruled that military documents failed to prove the generals were part of a conspiracy to create IFP hit-squads.

On Thursday the six black IFP supporters were cleared of all charges and yesterday it was the turn of the white men, who allegedly pulled their strings, to go free.

Happy man: Magnus Malan arriving at court in Durban for yesterday's verdicts

Photograph: Mark Wing/AP



## Peace prize highlights forgotten Timor war

RICHARD LLOYD PARRY

In an announcement that will gravely embarrass the Indonesian government, and renew attention in one of the world's "forgotten" wars, the Nobel Peace Prize was yesterday awarded to the Catholic bishop of East Timor and an exiled Timorese resistance leader, for their work towards a peaceful settlement in the Indonesian-occupied territory.

The \$112m (£700,000) prize will be shared equally by Bishop Carlos Ximenes Belo and Jose Ramos-Horta, a former member of the East Timorese resistance and the territory's leading international spokesman. In a devastating citation which will be read in Jakarta, the Norwegian Nobel Committee congratulated the two "for their efforts towards a just and peaceful settlement of the conflict in East Timor".

"In 1975 Indonesia took control of East Timor and began systematically oppressing the people," the statement added. "In the years that followed, it has been estimated that one-third of the population of East Timor lost their lives due to starvation, epidemics, war and terror... the Norwegian Nobel Committee wants to honour their sustained and self-sacrificing contributions for a small but oppressed people."

The announcement was welcomed by the Vatican and the world's international attention to the tragic plight of East Timor, a former Portuguese colony invaded by Indonesia in 1975. Its annexation has been repeatedly condemned by the United Nations, and Indonesian troops have been involved in a bitter guerrilla war ever since with the dwindling East Timorese resistance.

In 1991, more than 200 East Timorese died and scores of others "disappeared" when troops fired on mourners at a cemetery in the capital, Dili. Despite repeated claims that its execution was supported by the majority of East Timorese, the problem remains an acute embarrassment to the government of President Suharto, which will only be accentuated by the Nobel Committee's announcement.

"We are quite surprised and regret that such a venerable institution could award a person like Ramos-Horta, who had been clearly involved in organising and manipulating the people of East Timor to separate from the



Men of peace: Bishop Belo (above) and Jose Ramos-Horta

university republic of Indonesia," the Indonesian Foreign Office said yesterday.

"This was about to become a forgotten conflict," Francis Sejersted, chairman of the prize committee, said in Oslo. "By awarding this prize, we hope to contribute to a diplomatic solution to the conflict."

"A part from its monetary value, the award will boost the profile of the 48-year-old Bishop Belo, who has become a symbol of peaceful resistance since his appointment to the mostly Catholic territory in 1983. He has repeatedly criticised the Indonesian military and called for a referendum on self-determination."

The bishop has received death threats and lives under constant surveillance by Indonesian intelligence officers in his home in Dili.

Mr Ramos-Horta, who lives in Australia, is the author of a detailed peace proposal presented in 1992 to the UN and European Parliament. "I am obviously happy," he told Australian radio yesterday.

"But I feel that the man who should have earned it along with Bishop Belo, is Xanana Gusmao, the leader of East Timor, the leader of resistance." Since 1992 Mr Gusmao has been serving a 20-year sentence in Jakarta.

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Wild at heart: Jan "the Fat One" Jensen, one of the Bandidos leaders

Photograph: Ole Steen

## Scandinavia takes on its gangland warriors.

TONY BARBER  
Copenhagen

Scandinavia governments, shocked into action by a missile attack that killed two people and wounded 19 in Copenhagen, announced plans yesterday to crack down on motorcycle gang warfare, which is undermining the region's reputation for tranquillity and safety. The justice ministers of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden said they would create a register of stolen weapons, examine the personal finances of bikers to see if they had obtained money illegally and co-ordinate police investigations into motorcycle crime across the region.

The Danish parliament has passed a law aimed at driving biker clubhouses out of residential neighbourhoods. The legislation was adopted four days after an anti-tank missile was fired at the Copenhagen

### HIDEOUTS OF THE HELL'S ANGELS



headquarters of the Hell's Angels, killing a would-be gang member and a young mother who was attending a party there but had no other connection with the bikers.

Police suspect responsibility for the attack lies with the Bandidos, a gang which has been in violent conflict with the Hell's Angels since it moved into the region in summer 1993. Danish

police have arrested a Bandidos supporter after discovering another anti-tank device buried under a garage in Kulhusen, 25 miles north of Copenhagen.

Last weekend's violence in the Danish capital had in some respects a tragic inevitability about it. Far from taking action to suppress the gang's murderous and criminal activities, the Copenhagen city council has paid large sums in rent support to enable the Hell's Angels to stay in their headquarters at Tittangade, the street where the missile exploded.

Despite the fortress-like appearance of the Hell's Angels premises, the mayor, Jens Kramme Mikkelsen, insisted on thinking of it as a "community centre" or "youth club" rather than a nerve-centre of violence and crime. However, as the number of violent incidents in densely populated areas rose, local people grew increasingly angry at the kid-glove treatment of the bikers, many of whom live largely on welfare benefits and the proceeds of organised crime.

The missile used in last weekend's attack was stolen in 1994 from army stores in Sweden. Other missiles from that break-in have been fired at Hell's Angels clubhouses in other parts of Denmark.

Denish experts on biker gangs criticised the Copenhagen authorities for not banning last Sunday's so-called "Viking party" at which the missile was directed. The woman who died was one of a number of local people whom the Hell's Angels had invited, in an apparent effort to improve their image in the neighbourhood.

Danish police said yesterday that they had seized documents at a Hell's Angels meeting place last week that indicated the gang was planning to expand into eastern Europe. Countries marked down for new operations included Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Russia and Ukraine.

Nine people have been killed and almost 50 wounded since 1994 in the feud in the region between Hell's Angels and Bandidos. One of the worst incidents occurred last March when the Danish Bandido leader, Uffe Larsen, was shot dead at Copenhagen airport after he and his fellow bikers were ambushed by a rival gang.

Less than a year before that, the newly elected Bandido president, Mikael Ljunggren, was killed by a sniper while riding his bike near the Swedish city of Helsingborg. Police said those responsible were either Hell's Angels or a Bandido faction opposed to Ljunggren's leadership.

However, biker gangs are not a new phenomenon in Scandinavia. One such gang, known as 666, was active in Denmark as early as the mid-Seventies.

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children aged three or four engaged in every kind of sexual act, with other minors or with adults", the biggest such haul in Europe. Police said the images themselves had been filmed in southern and eastern European countries. More detections are expected.

The two Catalans had apparently accumulated their pornographic archive in Vic, near Barcelona, by exchanging or buying images through the Internet, using stolen passwords.

The police raid, the climax of four months of investigation - following a tip-off by special agents of the US Treasury department - prompted shrill demands yesterday for stricter regulation of the Internet and stiffer penalties for child pornography.

### THE SUNDAY REVIEW

Once he bestrode world politics like a colossus; now he's all but forgotten. But Mikhail Gorbachev would still like his superpower back. He talks to Ian Parker about politics and American movies

Photo synthesis: Eve Arnold celebrates the life and work of Robert Capa

Plus: new fiction by Junot Diaz, Helen Fielding on country house hotels, and Terence Conran on design

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# Both fighting fit... but who will slip up?

**S**o we emerge from the party conference season, heading into a long drawn-out election campaign, with Tony Blair way ahead in the polls, but John Major having the recent bout on points. Mr Blair had a good conference: his set-piece speech lifted hearts, giving delegates the sense that Labour is still a party of lofty ideals and that he is pursuing office to put traditional principles into modern action. But the man who comes second to the fight gets a lift from having seen his opponent spar; John Major niftily exploited the advantage. Bournemouth was expected to prove a rock and a hard place for the Tory high command, who could offer the Euro-sceptic rank and file little more than a formula for present prevarication. In the event, however, the platform clapped hands and won the rapturous applause of the party.

Earlier in the week Mr Major performed a neat trick by taking off his jacket and wowing them in the aisles. Yesterday he came across again as an unexcitable but confident Prime Minister, who compared his own at-ease posture with Mr Blair's faintly over-the-top messianic fervour the week before. By twanging the harp of his lower-middle-class background Mr Major manufactured a contrast with Mr Blair, presenting the Labour leader as remote and elitist. Of course we should absolutely distrust the caricature

that one party leader draws of his opponent. That said, Mr Major knows he is playing a clever tune, because his party's pollsters are finding some voters who don't like what they see as "sharm" in Mr Blair. Mr Blair, for his part, knows that his vulnerability centres on the degree to which voters trust him to be what he says he is.

Voters insist that they are not affected by these well-managed party conference rituals. The truth, though, is that the image of the parties and their leaders that emerges in commentary and news presentation from these conferences has a real effect on the public perception. In that way, the conferences matter.

They also provide the party faithful with a springboard for a feeling. On that level, both Labour and the Conservatives are in good order: they are both disciplined, ready and honed for battle. Underneath that smoothly veneered appearance, however, lie the risks of possible rot.

Take Labour. A large slice of its poll lead over the Tories is squishy. It is based more on discontent at the Tory record than popular affirmation of Labour values or visions. Perhaps old correlations between consumer confidence and support for the party in power are no longer as tight as they were; even so, it would be odd if the Tories picked nothing up from the burgeoning signs of eco-



nomic well-being. And Labour still lacks complete conviction in key areas – on education, for example, Mr Blair's call to comprehensive arms is undermined by his own and Harriet Harman's personal parental choices.

The Tory cry of hypocrisy, however, carries little weight. Look at those frankly disgraceful passages in Mr Major's speech yesterday when he tried at one and the same time to extol opportunity, enterprise and self-help (as exemplified by the Brixton boy made good) and promise to cancel taxes on inherited wealth which represent the state's legitimate effort to level the playing field of life a little. A party genuinely interested in rewarding talent and effort would have no truck with grubby proposals to let suburban residents give their children an even more generous start in life than they already get. It would be run, too, if the public bought any of Mr Major's topsy-turvy claim that foreigners all want to imitate our 1,000 years of "united" British history: Edward I built those castles in Wales for the benefit of tourists, presumably.

As for the pretence that the British Parliament is the free world's model – it would be laughable if it did not disclose how reluctant the Conservatives are to relinquish their rule within an electoral system which continues to reward a minority of voters with the

choice of government. Every single country that began with a simulacrum of the Westminster parliament has now moved to make its electoral arrangements fairer and the conduct of its legislative business more efficient; the way we govern ourselves is not a model, it is a glaring international example of bad practice.

The Conservatives rejuvenated themselves this week, but only inside the conference hall. Outside, as Polly Toynbee reported yesterday, implacable forces are waging war within the party over Europe. Bournemouth was a Potemkin village. The Tories' tactic towards Sir James Goldsmith and his Referendum Party seems to be to ignore him in the hope that he will eventually fade away. He won't. His incubus is here for the duration.

Bournemouth's slender basis for unity may be enough to see the Tories through to the polls. It may not. Unless Europe explodes underneath them, the fight with Labour will be close, and deserves to be. For all the allegations by world-weary commentators that the parties have become too much alike, we emerge from this past two weeks with real alternatives of policy and principles – with genuinely different visions of Britain that will now be placed before us. The ring is clear. Seconds away.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Whitehall power behind the menace of organophosphates

**Sir:** There is only one safe way of dealing with organophosphates (OPs) in agriculture: ban them completely ("Tom King was victim of Gulf-syndrome pesticide", 9 Oct). As with resolving the BSE crisis, that will come about when the abominable power of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) working hand-in-glove with agrochemical manufacturers, is broken.

UK farmers continue to use OP sheep dips as a routine prophylactic against sheep scab, despite mounting evidence of the health risks and repeated warnings by the OP Information Network and Friends of the Earth ("Scab Wars: the impacts of OP sheep dips on farmers, livestock and the environment", FOE 1993). They do so because MAFF has made it clear that any outbreak of sheep scab is likely to result in prosecution.

Elsewhere, sheep are dipped only when there is an outbreak of scab or to prevent fly-strike.

The UK regulatory system is ineffective and riddled with serious conflicts of interest, as in so many others. MAFF behaves as if its sole public duty is to increase food production at all costs. Yet, it is also responsible for licensing sheep dips (jointly with the Department of Health) and overseeing their use. All dips are approved on the basis of assessments made within MAFF. In turn, these assessments depend on data submitted by the manufacturers. This data is deemed "commercially confidential", and is not released publicly nor subject to independent review. Two of the main OPs (chlordifenophos and propetamphos) used in dips have never been subject to a full evaluation of their human health or environmental impacts by MAFF.

OP threats are not confined in sheep dips. MAFF now recommends that the public should top and peel all carrots before eating because unexpectedly high residues of five different and acutely toxic OPs have been discovered in sample testing.

Over half the carrot crop in the UK receives three OP treatments a year, although up to nine applications were reported in 1994. Some 1-2 per cent of carrots tested contained OP residues up to 25 times higher than expected. Most British carrots are grown in intensive monocultures in Lincolnshire and Norfolk. Carrot fly is now endemic in these regions. The Government's own Advisory Committee on Pesticides recently reported that "in

order for UK growers to produce carrot crops to the standard required by the major retail outlets, the use of multiple applications for the control of carrot fly is considered essential".

As farmers besieged the Conservative Party Conference on Monday, loudly complaining of the MAFF's handling of the BSE crisis, and with the memories of other agriculture scandals from the veal trade to salmonella in eggs still fresh in our minds, surely politicians from all parties will now wake up to the fact that something is badly and endemically wrong with British agriculture?

The alternatives – whole-hearted support for organic farming and genuine integrated pest management systems, with agrochemicals used as a last resort – are known, proven, safe and affordable. Such best practices won't arrive magically, but when politicians are pressured to change the regulations and subsidies which drive increasingly intensive and unnatural farming methods, that job is up to consumers, farmers and environmentalists working together. What better time to start than in the run-up to the general election – anyone interested?

**CHARLES SECRETTE**  
Director  
Friends of the Earth  
London N1

**Sir:** The evidence is staring us in the face: organophosphates have in the last two years been associated with Gulf war syndrome, mad cow disease (BSE), scrapie, and CJD.

The only other country in Europe that uses high doses of organophosphates for pest control of their cows is Switzerland, and they also have serious problems with BSE.

Organophosphates are very dangerous chemicals, related to mustard gas. They are termed "safe" for use on crops and animals because they break down "fast" in the environment. However a recent investigation by one of my students on his family farm has shown that much higher quantities of organophosphates enter surface and groundwaters than we thought before.

What I would like to know is: whether we are more at risk of CJD, from drinking water, eating carrots, eating bread, or eating beef? Am I poisoning my children when I present them with a "well balanced" dinner?

**Dr KVALA RAGNARSDOTTIR**  
Lecturer in Environmental  
Geochemistry  
University of Bristol



Photograph: AFP

### Aid is the business of charities

**Sir:** William Shawcross's provocative argument ("Never mind Oxfam, DHL can deliver", 10 October), that humanitarian aid could be entirely contracted to private companies, doing away with charities, starts from a false assumption: that aid is simply a matter of getting things to people. It is not.

First, there is the question of what is needed. In emergencies which involve a wholesale breakdown of society, this requires careful judgement. The wrong commodity, or the right one wrongly applied, can kill. The process of assessment of what is needed, and of ordering, distributing and monitoring those goods, must be under the control of experienced agencies with staff proficient in administering social care in the local context. This is what aid agencies are for.

Second, aid is not delivered in a vacuum. The need arises from complex political, military, economic and social crises. Aid is an intervention in a distorted political economy. If that context is not analysed and understood by agencies with experience, aid will have all kinds of unintended effects. It can fuel war economies, destroy local production and contribute to the asset-stripping of the poor by people with power and influence.

Third, even in emergencies aid should be used with a development perspective. In south Sudan, for

instance, instead of flooding the war zone with food aid every dry season, Oxfam and others have supported communities to build up their own food security, distributing seeds and tools and fishing equipment which will reduce their long-term vulnerability. And when we do make use of private contractors – to dig a well, improve a road, provide textiles to make clothing – we usually support the local economy by sourcing the contract in the region.

Agencies working with the victims of conflict have a responsibility to advocate on their behalf among the governments and multilateral institutions who can affect their fate – something one can hardly imagine Ewan or American Express doing.

Certainly the aid sector must become more efficient and effective, and there is plenty of room for self-criticism. The more responsible British agencies are at the forefront of this critical thinking. Oxfam, Save the Children, the International Federation of the Red Cross, the World Council of Churches and others have established an international code of conduct. The same group is now leading a follow-up effort to establish recognised standards for the delivery of humanitarian aid.

**DAVID BRYER**  
Director  
Oxfam  
Oxford

### How dangerous are old trees?

**Sir:** Reading Stephen Goodwin's article on the Lake District National Park's plan to fell the Rusland beeches (7 October) I am driven to wonder how much "expert" opinion is based on scientific analysis, and how much on traditional prejudice against supposedly decaying trees.

The beeches, we are told, are in a "dangerous" condition. Has this danger been quantified? Certainly an old tree might shed a branch, but the statistical chance of it doing so at the very moment someone is passing under the very spot the branch falls must be remote in the extreme. Have the park authorities a mathematical estimate of the chances of it happening?

Is it feared that a whole tree might topple over? Again, even if one did, the chance of it hitting someone as it fell must be very small, especially compared with the many small everyday risks we are all compelled to take.

Old, decaying, trees don't fall over, they just continue decaying away, over decades, to a bare trunk that rots on the spot. Trees that blow over in storms are almost invariably ones that showed no prior signs of age or weakness, as many people in the South-east will recall from the 1986 "hurricane".

**CAPADLEY**  
Market Rasen, Lincolnshire

### Fine judgement

**Sir:** The elevation of a judge to the office of Lord Chief Justice is by selection, not an election ("Senior judges round on the Tories", 9 October). The Prime Minister and Lord Chancellor must select whom they consider the right judge for the office.

What would the press say if it was by election? "14 old codgers elect on their own to top job". The views of 14 Lord Justices of Appeal are as relevant, constitutionally, as my own.

**ARNOLD ROSEN**  
Arnold Rosen and Co, solicitors  
London W1

### Railroaded

**Sir:** Just as Tony Blair had got us all wondering why the Labour Party ever existed, Ian Lang, with his proposals to remove immunity from trade unions who go on strike (report, 10 October) has reminded us. The Taff Vale Railway Company no longer exists but people who want to make the trains run on time at any cost to liberty and democracy are still with us.

**TOM MOTTERSHEAD**  
London N21

### Weaker sex

**Sir:** Although health campaigns such as the Breast Awareness supplement of 8 October are nearly always directed at women, men on average die younger. The factors in this reduced life expectancy are mainly social and environmental, and therefore also highly preventable. You would expect to see issues affecting men's health more prominently.

**ALASTAIR McGOWAN**  
Salisbury

### Alien alert

**Sir:** Unlike Ms Tatham (letter, 3 October) the first culture shock I encountered on entering the United States was not the "women" signs on lavatory doors but the "VISITING ALIENS" sign above passport control.

**RACHEL LODGE**  
Huddersfield, West Yorkshire

mocking some of the rituals of European summits, and with the odd flourish of waspish wit.

But it is, of course, dangerous territory, since *Private Eye's* rival "Diary of John Major" helped fix the man in the eye of the nation as a hopelessly Pootierish innocent. It was predictable, then, that Major's real diary was duly described as "almost identical" to the spoof (*Express*) and Pootier elsewhere – the *Daily Telegraph* headlined it "Diary of a Somebody".

Here was a classic example of the snobbery that so enrages him. But he protests too much. All political leaders in this

All political leaders are caricatured –

**Tony Blair's**  
reputation is being  
marinaded in pesto  
and balsamic  
vinegar all the time,  
to Major's glee

country are lampooned and caricatured – Tony Blair's reputation is being marinaded in pesto and balsamic vinegar all the time, to Major's evident glee. Indeed, I think it is probably unconstitutional for the press not to lampoon politicians. These days, politicians across the world are starting to use their life-histories as marketing tools – "buy me, I had a tough childhood". It is demeaning, and I don't suppose many of us are affected by it. But if politicians play that personality game, they can hardly complain about being mocked.

Our coverage of the Tories' week has been generally quite favourable. This has greatly irritated some senior Labour people, who ask if we are "changing sides". I can reassure them. The answer is no. We weren't signed up to Labour before, and we aren't on Major's side now. We reported that the Tory conference went well because it did. This is called journalism.

**Andrew Marr**

### QUOTE UNQUOTE

I like being in love. There's no other reason for being on Earth. It's the only time you're not in control – Adam Faith, veteran pop star

You cannot lead from a position of saying: "I have not made up my mind" – Lord Tebbit on the European single currency issue

I have never said I don't want to be Prime Minister – Peter Lilley, Social Security Secretary

I have nothing personal against Michael Howard. For, as St Augustine once said, we must hate the sin and love the sinner – Lord Longford

The obsession of journalists with the search for splits and conflict means that politicians cannot speak without the risk of being misrepresented – Clare Short, Labour MP

There is no point in being at the heart of Europe if the heart is diseased – Norman Lamont, former Chancellor

Given a choice between dinner with Norma or 15 men, Norma won hands down – John Major, complaining that he left the Dublin Euro-summit early last weekend because it was their wedding anniversary

Hands up, those who think I'm going to tell you what's in the Budget! – John Major, in a question session at the Tory party conference in Bournemouth

### All will be revealed at Trust meeting

**Sir:** I have read the letters from Mrs Webb (7 October) and Mr Theakstone (9 October), following the letter from Lord Kitchener and John Wilks (3 October) with interest and some dismay. I know that both Mrs Webb and Mr Theakstone are longstanding and loyal members of the National Trust, which makes it all the more sad that the impression which they have of the Trust is misinformed in almost every way. Clearly the way in which we represent ourselves to at least some of our members needs to be improved.

It would take much too long to answer in this letter all the points made by Mrs Webb and Mr Theakstone but I hope that they might be able to attend our annual general meeting on 2 November so that I can explain to them what the Trust is really like nowadays. Lord Kitchener and Dr Wilks will no doubt be there too, to present their resolution.

**CHARLES NUNNLEY**  
Chairman, The National Trust  
London SW1

### Why the Dutch did not fight at Srebrenica

**Sir:** In Robert Fisk's article "The damning truth written on the pages of Document No 3206" (October 8) a United Nations order issued by the acting commander of Unprofor on 11 July 1995 to the Dutch UN commander in the Srebrenica enclave is presented as a fact.

The decision of the Dutch commander not to execute this order is presented as quite shameful.

However, Mr Fisk's interpretation is completely beside the facts.

The document "revealed" by Mr Fisk was made public by the Netherlands Ministry of Defence a year ago in the official report on Srebrenica, based on an extensive briefing of Dutch UN personnel. In this report, which was widely distributed and translated into English, and in response to parliamentary questions, the UN order was described in full detail.

Letters should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL (fax 0171-233 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk) and include a daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret we are unable to acknowledge unpublished letters.

## the saturday story

The picture-postcard Utopia that is haven for the rich revealed its uglier side this week: snobbish, mean-minded, selfish, hypocritical. Peter Popham journeyed to a corner of England caught in a time warp: Surrey



Laurie Brigg, aged 12, was banned from a family golf competition in a Surrey club because he was adopted

PHOTOGRAPHERS INTERNATIONAL

estate are guarded by closed-circuit television. The mansions have grand names like Somerton House or Edgeworth; elderly ladies in tweed exercise small dogs along the meandering, deserted lanes in the shade of the big trees.

Time has stopped here at some perfect but unspecifiable point between the 1820s and the 1920s. Many of the newest houses are so huge they must have numerous staff. One imagines them touching their forelocks and living Downstairs.

The rich irony of St George's Hill is that, distinct from the fake past in which it is engrossed, it has a real history which speaks of an utterly different English tradition.

In 1649, after the Civil War, a labourer called Gerrard Winstanley, who 'herded' cows in Walton-on-Thames, had a vision in which he was instructed to publish it abroad that 'the earth should be made a common treasury of livelihood to whole mankind, without respect of persons'. It was a vision of communist utopia, and on 1 April that year, Winstanley and up to 100 followers invaded St George's Hill and began to dig the land, insisting by their actions that the land belonged to everyone. They were called the Diggers; the community they instigated here lasted a year before it was finally put to flight.

The action of the Diggers was the high point of the English revolution that never happened. Winstanley was its prophet. 'In the beginning of time,' he wrote, 'the great creator, Reason, made the earth to be a common treasury ...

... selfish imaginations ... did set up one man to lead and rule over another. And thereby ... man was brought into bondage ... And hereupon the earth ... was hedged into enclosures ... And that earth that is within this creation made a common storehouse for all, is bought and sold and kept in the hands of a few, whereby the great Creator is mighty disfavoured, as if he were a respecter of persons, delighting in the comfortable livelihood of some and rejoicing in the miserable poverty and straits of others. From the beginning it was not so ...'

Winstanley's revolution was not merely put to flight: here on St George's Hill its utter opposite has been erected. If Winstanley's ghost were to wander these shady lanes, you would surely know it by the sound of uncontrollable weeping.

# Down the A3 to the Middle Ages

**T**here is a corner of the Home Counties where the inhabitants live longer than elsewhere in Britain, where they earn more money, live in more splendid houses, drive more and bigger cars, enjoy more beautiful scenery. It is the lucky county, a little bit of California on the River Wey. It's called Surrey. It's also the county where this week 13-year-old Laurie Brigg was banned from a "family" golf competition because he was adopted.

Surrey is the epitome of southern England's picture-postcard charm. But it is also the incubator of all southern England's nastiest little ways, as the Brigg's story exemplified: snobbish, mean-minded, selfish, hypocritical.

In case anyone has forgotten, the story went like this: at Birt Hill Golf Club, near Walton-on-Thames in one of the choicer parts of the county, Laurie, Brazilian by birth, had already progressed to the third round when another member complained that he was ineligible to

play in the competition, and he was duly disqualified. Only after a vast hullabaloo in the media – including the sort of papers which enjoy big Surrey circulations – was the ban reversed. For petty unpleasantness it was a tale that took some heating.

Surrey looks backwards to a past that is too pretty and perfect ever to have been true, and forwards to a future of ever-increasing privilege, ever-increasing disparity between the folks on the hill and the proletarians in the Kwik-Save. Surrey holds up a mirror to the aspirational middle-class values of the aspirational middle-class values of the late Nineties. Look into it and squirm.

The county is, of course, one of the truest blue corners of the country, and the present clutch of MPs provides some useful clues to the Surrey breed. Lady Olgia Maitland, who represents Sutton and Cheam on the northern border of the county, is a Surrey person pushed to the point of parody, with her shrill hounding in of criminals and scroungers; she is also a real toff, which may explain why Sutton and Cheam

took her to its aspiring bosom (she had failed to endear herself to at least 20 other constituents before).

Kenneth Baker, the smarmiest man in the House, with his prim vowels and his unctuous grin, is a fair representative of the species the head-girls of Virginia Bottomley captures in her "families" golf competition because he was adopted.

That is life among Surrey's immortals. The downside for ordinary people living amidst such a landscape of achievement is the social neurosis that pervades the county's life.

"Surrey has its own particularly bad kind of snobbery," says a local teacher who comes from the same day from London.

"A friend of mine who recently moved to the county took her child along to a playgroup, and was dismayed when she got a rather cold reception. It was quietly pointed out to her that there was another playgroup it might be more suitable for her child to join. Socially the two were practically indistinguishable. She was baffled. Then she discovered that she came from the wrong side of the road."

"People in Surrey are very aware of their position on the ladder. They say things like, 'Addlestone [a relatively poor

village] is where you live while you're waiting to move on to Weybridge.'

The most vital ingredient of Surrey's appeal is its distinctness from London. Driving southwest towards Guildford on the A3, one quite suddenly emerges from the long shapeless expanse of Tudor-bethan suburbs, and this is one of southern England's most brilliant effects, because suddenly you have arrived back in the Middle Ages, before the clearing of the forests.

"There are, only a few miles out of Europe's biggest city, and the ancient deciduous woodland stretches in wave after wave to the horizon, broken only (it seems) by this fast, sinuous road."

This is the most complete of Surrey's deceptions, the most successful of its lies. We are not in real countryside, but green belt. Surrey has little true country: farmers constitute 0.8 per cent of the county workforce –

over huge swathes of Surrey, the gorgeous green cover is densely infested with commuting life.

But it is certainly beautiful. And at about the same moment that the scenery dramatically improves, the rain clouds flee away and the sun comes out. I left London in a dark drizzle, and arrived in Cobham by a lovely autumn day.

I mentioned this fact to the Scottish woman serving me in Cobham's bookshop. Her face flushed with complicit pride. "Och, that's what it's like down here," she trilled, beaming. "It always seems to turn out nice in these parts!"

That's the way it seems to these lucky people: a vista of permanent nice ness. But those who have scaled the ladder of wealth emerge beyond the clouds into the realms of the awesome. This culminates, for the seriously rich, in a mansion in the guarded, gated estate of St George's Hill, on the outskirts of Weybridge and Walton-on-Thames, which is claimed to be the most exclusive and expensive estate in the country.

The smallest houses here cost £600,000, and the grandest mansions several million.

One cannot simply walk around St George's Hill at will. On the other private estates around these towns, which are numerous, zealously implemented Neighbourhood Watch schemes mean that any outsider gets a frank stare if he ventures to wander around. At St George's Hill, however, you don't even get past the front gate without a good reason. So I decided to start shopping around for a half-million pound home for my parents, whereabouts a Weybridge estate agent was happy to give me a tour.

The estate is so large that it

contains a full-sized golf course, which runs through the middle of it. Like much of wealthy Surrey, the estate inhabits a strange, idealised rich man's past, where the trees are deciduous and mature, the architecture is vaguely (but imposingly) Queen-Anne or Georgian, but the Bentleys are the latest model, the fabric of the house is likewise brand new, and the subsidiary entrances to the

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## jo brand's week



Like comedy, political life contains very few women, even though women are gaining more than a foothold in other areas of work. In comedy, I think it is a confidence problem. Plenty of women try it, but many give up, because they find difficult audiences more damaging to their self-esteem. Blokes, on the whole, tend to have more confidence, or at least appear to. They're dead good at seeming to have things under control, which is half the battle.

I suppose politics is similar to comedy in several ways. You get a bit of a verbal mauling in the press, some heckling, and you are called upon to talk a fair bit of rubbish under pressure. So what's putting women off politics? Well, it could be the way in which women politicians continue to be scrutinised purely visually by a section of the press: the hours are difficult for women with families, and the House of Commons is like a boy's club at which hickering and point-scoring reign supreme. I suspect, however, that a fair few women might have been put off by some female role models and not least Gruppenfuehrer Thatcher. Back this week at the Tory party conference, as humourless and rigid as ever, I expect many women think that if this is the prototype, maybe it's not worth bothering.

Eileen Heseltine, mother of Mick, wants children to be soundly thrashed, following an incident in which a friend of hers was hit with a stone thrown by some kids from the local council estate. Much as I sympathise with the poor woman, I suspect that perhaps the kids throwing the stones have already had several sound thrashings and maybe that is why they are behaving like this. I wonder whether young Mick got leathered or not. It may explain a few things.

"What are you doing for Christmas?" I was asked today. I have absolutely no idea, apart from apparently being encouraged not to have a flu jab and agonising about which record is going to be number one on Jesus's birthday. Young and healthy people, according to the Chief Medical Officer, should not have sex because there are only six million available and they should be reserved for vulnerable people. Why don't they provide enough for everyone? Money, of course. So, all you big girls' houses out there who can really cope with a bit of shivering, sweating and looking like a menopausal cod for a week, lay off the jabs. At least you can lie in bed and listen to the usual charming selection of aural seasonal offerings.

It's remarkably pleasurable to see the underdog win. I was in Soho the other day and a lorry which picks up cars and takes them to the car pound was blocking our way. The man on the machinery was nearly finished with his job and a small crowd had gathered to watch. (And I bet you always thought Soho was a really exciting place.) He had attached wires to the wheels and began to haul the car up. As it rose to about two feet off the ground, a man appeared from nowhere, sprinted towards the car,

after all, been based entirely on the assumption that if you don't have two flawless Zeppelins down your blouse that arrive several seconds before you do, then life ain't worth a thing. This country's mammal fixation has led many women to believe that losing one of these assets is the end of the world. Still, in this day and age, I suppose that any money is welcomed by charities, wherever it may be from.

I often wondered if my name would ever make it to hurricane status and I was rewarded this week by the discovery that Hurricane Josephine was sweeping across the Gulf of Mexico. Hurricanes are quite predictable these days, due to the improved science of meteorology. In the old days, the only way you could tell if one was coming was to lick your finger and hold it up.

So when will Hurricane Josephine strike? Not tonight, possibly.

According to Sarah Biffen, wives of Cabinet ministers have had enough. So has the rest of the country, madam. Her main complaints are that her husband is always tired ... a positive advantage, I would have thought, in the case of some of the more unsavoury geers in the Cabinet. Sarah Biffen's other complaint is that Cabinet wives are sick of going to state banquets. Apparently, the novelty wears off very quickly, and these poor women sound as though they believe that being grumpily forced to show yet another morsel of expensive posh people's food down their throats is a fate worse than death.

Well, I am sure there are plenty of people in this country who haven't had a meal like this ever, who would be only too willing to fill in for them – or indeed fill them in, on the basis of that complaint. Moaning about this sort of privilege is not much of a vote catcher. I would have thought,

Jo's in 100

regional variations

I used to think things we have in common are greater than the things that divide us

david aaronovitch

I won't be long now before an incoming Labour administration, red eyes gleaming with its malign job of breaking up the United Kingdom. I know this because I have been all week with the Tories in Bournemouth, and they told me about it. First Labour will give the Scots a parliament and the Welsh an assembly. The Scots parliament will fall out with Westminster and demand independence, and the sons of Cymru will follow suit. London will clamour for self-governance. Yorkshire will secede. Cornwall will demand enosis with Brittany. Fini.

On the face of it, this is a dreadful prospect. Are not the things we have in common (language, culture, hatred of Michael Howard, self-pity) greater than the things which divide us? I thought so until Thursday, when this newspaper carried a report on *Family Spending* (Stationery Office, £35.95). What this volume reveals has shattered my easy assumptions about our shared characteristics.

It is not so much the "what". This indicates that there are great differences in the way that the inhabitants of the various regions and nations of this, our island home, spend their money: 83 per cent of West Midlanders have video recorders, compared with an average of 79 per cent. Yes? And?

It's the why that matters. What explains, for instance, why Northern Irish women spend vastly more on "outer garments" than anyone else? Why do those from Devon and Cornwall favour petticoats more than the rest of us? Does this tell us something rather fundamental about identity and behaviour?

Let us take these examples in turn. It cannot be true that the Ulster outer garment org is attributable to climate alone. The Scottish weather is arguably more inclement for more of the year. Are the



daughters of the province somehow less careful with their coats, always leaving them on the Giant's Causeway or something? Personally, I think it is down to chronic church attendance, and the desire to look good in front of the priest, vicar and congregation.

What about the pet lovers of the West Country? I am taken with an image of a stout Devonian entering a sweet shop, examining the cans of Coke and Sprite, and saying, "Sod it, I'll have a cat instead". Does Fanta taste bad in Taunton, or fur feel softer? A better explanation might lie in the well-ordered hang-ups of the English Riviera, whose elderly inhabitants are more likely to find Lucozade giving them wind, and Tiddlers giving them companionship.

Yorkshire's washing habits, I must confess, are a bigger problem to solve. A desire not to waste electricity cannot be the explanation for the aversion to tumble dryers; if it were, then Yorkshire folk would be less keen on washing machines. Is it because the wind to rain ratio is uniquely favourable, allowing clothes to be better dried in the open? Or is it a combination of large gardens and tiny houses that leads to this, an inheritance from Yorkshire's mining past, perhaps?

The one that I am not prepared to speculate about is the statistic showing that the Welsh spend less on cosmetics and hair products. My mums live just north of Cardiff, part of a vast extended family, and always look as though they have invested more than adequately in cleansing products.

Given these disparities, and the psychologies that lie behind them, the question must at least be asked: whether the attempt to hold together these various different parts is as doomed to failure as is European federalism, as was the Soviet empire, and as will be the United States of America. Cards on the table: I, for one, do not really want to live in a society that loves pets, hates tumble dryers and can't look after its coats.

You have just been woken up by your Manchester United alarm clock (£10), and you peer from beneath your Manchester United duvet (£30) at your bedroom wall, papered, of course, in Manchester United colours (£7 a roll). Switching on your Manchester United lamp (£17), you go into the bathroom, wash and dry off with your Manchester United towel (£10)... and so on, until you turn in for the night and take off your Manchester United sports watch (£25).

This is modern day football. Gone are the days when you picked up your scarf and your rattle and headed for the ground to claim your usual square foot of the terraces for about a fiver. Today, you are more likely to wear your £40 replica shirt and head for your £25 seat in the stands.

Football is big business. Yesterday, when Manchester United chairman Martin Edwards said he might consider selling the club if the price were right, he hinted that bidding should start at £400m. And there appears to be no shortage of takers.

The improvements in English football grounds imposed after the publication of the Taylor report into the 1989 Hillsborough disaster were the catalyst that began changing the face of the national sport. Making stadiums all-seater not only improved the game's image, but it also made clubs treat supporters like customers and not simply as terrace fodder.

Then, more importantly, came the formation of the Premier League and the injection of hundreds of millions of pounds - £670m for the next four seasons alone - from BSkyB in return for exclusive rights to broadcast live games. Football has been dragged into the satellite age.

With the money came the big-name players from abroad, increased attendances - up 33 per cent in 10 years - and a huge growth in sales of club merchandise. Manchester United alone shifts more than £20m worth of branded goods, from mugs to its own lager. Across all 92 clubs, the figure runs into hundreds of millions of pounds.

Crucially, it is this money, together with calmer and conference incomes, that now has City investors circling for the first time.

In the past, results on the pitch could lead to wild fluctuations in the share prices of the six quoted clubs - Manchester United, Tottenham Hotspur, Celtic, Chelsea, Preston North End and Millwall. And it isn't only the big City types who are buying. Small investors, too, are grabbing a piece of their favourite club. Since the Share Centre set up its football investors' ser-



Football is big business. When Manchester United chairman Martin Edwards said he might consider selling the club, he hinted that bidding should start at £400m'

market value in the region of £670m.

"Large investors have been waiting in the wings to see what happens with football, but now they are coming in and buying," said Victoria Wearing, assistant director of the Share Centre, a telephone trading service. "They used to be frightened off by the volatility of share prices because of on-the-pitch results, whereas now there is more stability because of the off-the-pitch business."

And it isn't only the big City types who are buying. Small investors, too, are grabbing a piece of their favourite club. Since the Share Centre set up its football investors' ser-

vice last February, sales have increased by 700 per cent.

So, all the Premiership clubs are now rich, right? Wrong. Last season, the downside of the big time began to bite. In the search for more success, bigger crowds, higher television fees and a greater income from merchandising - the upwards spiral achieved by Manchester United - clubs were forced to spend more than ever before on players.

Between them, the 92 Premiership and Football League clubs spent £110m on transfer fees - a record. More than £30m went to buy foreign players. But that wasn't the end of the story. Across the four divi-

sions, the wages bill raced ahead of inflation, rising by 14 per cent to create a total pay packet of £243m. And in the Premier League, wages increased by 22 per cent. Some Premiership players - like the £15m Newcastle striker Alan Shearer - can command wages in excess of £20,000 a week.

Transfer fees and higher wages forced many clubs - even some in the Premiership - into the red. Across the board, English clubs made a pre-tax loss of £14.1m from a total income of £463m.

Even Everton, one of the richest clubs in the country, fell £9.4m into the red after splashing out £12.7m on play-

ers. And it's tougher still in the lower divisions. Only 20 per cent of clubs in the First, Second and Third Divisions made a profit. The future for them looks grim as the Premier League continues to increase its share of all football income.

"It may well be that clubs in the lower divisions have to go semi-professional and, at some point in the future, they may form regional leagues,"

"Now that they have improved conditions, they are taking advantage by hiking up gate prices and worrying more about corporate hospitality than true supporters getting in to see their heroes."

"They exploit fans' loyalty and they'll carry on exploiting it because they know they can. They know it goes way beyond rational behaviour. It's true love."



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## The Lady's not for learning



merely to shock or to appeal only to our most base instincts."

Coming from the woman who used to pretend that some of her own Government's biggest blunders had nothing to do with her, but were always the fault of people who had kept her in the dark, this balderdash should not surprise us.

But it is curious that she limits the "coarsening of everything" to the world of art and culture. Why not politics, too? If freedom has no limits, might she not bear some responsibility for that?

After all, was not Thatcherism characterised by the unbridled use of power - power without limits - to beat up and beat down the perceived enemy within?

If anything goes, where did that come from? Who was it that appealed to "our most base instincts" - the money-grubbing, devil-take-the-hindmost culture in which the shop-doorway homeless and the privatised utility "fat cats" emerged as abiding monuments to Thatcherism?

It is curious that a man who appears as civilised as Mr Rifkind, an Edinburgh lawyer of moderate Tory tendencies, should volunteer a link between the Falklands and the miners' strike.

For some of those who were closest to Margaret Thatcher in the early years - those who created Thatcherism before she even knew it existed - grew to detest the style that emerged from the two "wars" - against the Argies and the miners.

And as *The Independent* has revealed, there is pitiful little left to show for all privatised industry revenues. North Sea oil

revenues, high-level public sector borrowing and debt, and the record peaks of personal tax burden that have accompanied the years of "modernisation".

But if one symbolic action illustrates Thatcherism more than any other, it is the way in which the teachers were treated. It was as Secretary of State for Education in the Heath administration that Margaret Thatcher came to public attention when she cut free milk for secondary schools and earned the title "Thatcher, Milk Snatcher". She never seemed to have much time for teachers, and it showed when she became Prime Minister in 1979.

But she became indiscriminate. Taking on local government with the poll tax rather missed the target, although she would never admit it. She did subsequently admit that the Single European Act, with its sacrifice of socialised sovereignty to the free market, was a sacrifice too far.

There has never been any apology, however. That is not her style. Thatcherism never made mistakes; it was seamless, pure, perfect.

Rampant and excessive trade union power was curbed; monolithic and impersonal nationalised industries were privatised. They were replaced by rampant and excessive management power to put people on insecure, short-term, part-time, low-pay contracts - and by equally monolithic and impersonal privatised industries.

So, happy birthday Lady Thatcher. Perhaps you will have time tomorrow to reflect that it is easier to destroy than to build. You destroyed more than you built. Having smashed the bottle on so many little heads, it is no use crying over spilt milk.

Her regime was built on the use of ruthless freedoms; so just who is Baroness Thatcher to complain about the resulting permissive society', asks Anthony Bevins

As Margaret Thatcher quietly celebrates her 71st birthday tomorrow, the rejoicing could be marred by a small shadow.

After 11 years in office, and more than five years after John Major succeeded her at Number 10, Baroness Thatcher has come to a rather grim conclusion - that all is not as rosy as Tory Cabinet ministers might have had us believe in Bournemouth this week.

The woman who once suggested that there was no such thing as society - as opposed to the families and individuals who thrived, or merely survived, within it - made a very sombre speech last month.

She told the Institute of United States Studies in London: "Liberty decays in an atmosphere where all is permitted and nothing is prohibited. The resulting permissive society is in fact no society at all."

Savour the words: let them marinate the mind. Soak them in and feel the bile rise. But, as you might expect of Lady Thatcher, there is more where that came from. She never did anything by halves.

"We have witnessed a coarsening of everything from art to music to literature to film. But for some people, there seems to be nothing beyond the pale - for them, freedom has no limits."

"The younger generation is being reared in a morally corrosive atmosphere where they are taught that anything goes. There is no elevation of the human spirit in works designed





JEREMY WARNER

Monetary union is an act of faith. Until it is tried, it is hard to tell what its effects might be'

## Pro-EMU business lobby is speaking out at last

One of the oddest and most disturbing things about European Monetary Union is just how little serious analysis and debate it has generated. This in itself may seem an odd thing to say about an issue which is always in the headlines, is making a reasonable fist of destroying the Conservative Party, and has even been known to cause the odd bar-room brawl. But if you think about it, it is true. The debate is conducted almost entirely at a political level, both here and on the Continent.

The argument here in Britain is between those who want to be a part of Europe and those who don't; on the Continent, EMU is an act of faith, a way of binding Europe together to ensure that never again will there be war or dissension between nations. But look for the serious economic analysis and polemic, and there's hardly any. Certainly there's nothing to compare with the Cecchini report on the likely effects of the single European market.

In part this is because EMU is indeed an act of faith. Until it is tried, it is hard to tell what its effects might be. We know that it will involve a not insignificant reduction in transaction costs, but we don't know much about its other economic effects. Nor do we really know whether it is possible to have both monetary union and, as envisaged, a continuation of independent national fiscal and social policies.

The questions are asked, but hardly ever is there a serious attempt to answer them. On the latter question, for instance, you either believe it will be possible or that it won't; the debate rarely rises above this simple statement of position. So it is refreshing to hear that big business, which constitutes one of the few pro-EMU lobbies in Britain, is planning to step up its efforts to air these issues.

Niall FitzGerald, newly appointed chairman of Unilever, is planning a full frontal attack on the anti-EMU brigade, which will be delivered from a businessman's perspective in a Chatham House speech next week. At its conference next month, the CBI promises a Euro debate, with David Simon, chairman of BP, and Peter Sutherland, chairman and managing director of Goldman Sachs (Europe), putting the case in favour of EMU. So as not to alienate the strong anti-EMU constituency, the CBI is lining up John Redwood and Sir John Hoskyns to put the other side of the case.

Mr FitzGerald makes an obvious champion of EMU. For a start, he's Irish. He also runs a company which is as strongly Dutch as it is British. Unilever is owned by two holding companies, one British and one Dutch, but it runs as a unified whole. If Holland were in, but Britain out, it would create the most horrendous problems. Furthermore, if the economic consequences of

being out were bad enough, then Unilever's rarely used mutual equalisation pact might have to be called on; assets would have to be transferred from the Dutch company to support the British.

Mr FitzGerald's concerns about being out go beyond these specific practical difficulties, however. At present all Unilever toilet soap for the European market is produced from a factory near Liverpool. That strategy and others like it will have to be rethought if Britain stays out.

Mr FitzGerald is only one of the most vocal in a growing body of business opinion. Slowly but surely, the pro-EMU business lobby is emerging from the closet. It is easy to see why this is such a painful and difficult process. There can scarcely have been a more pro-business administration – not since the last century anyway – than the one that has ruled Britain for the past 17 years. And yet as the rest of Europe hurtles down the path of monetary union, the Government becomes progressively more Euro-sceptic. There are now just two pro-EMU politicians left in the Cabinet, Kenneth Clarke and Michael Heseltine, and even they feel constrained in what they say. In public at least, they are gagged. The rest have run for cover. Even Michael Howard, once upon a time a convinced pro-European, now speaks the language of the rabid Euro-sceptic.

In these circumstances, it doesn't seem surprising that business too should hold its tongue and hedge its bets. Rarely does it pay to bite the hand that feeds you. All the same, a number of our leading multinationals are beginning to feel distinctly uncomfortable about their rabbit-like position, held in the glare of EMU's headlights. More of them are planning to speak out.

There has also been a subtle, but quite significant, shift in their position in recent months. Up until now, the pro-EMU view in Britain has generally been of the half-hearted variety espoused by Lord Kingsdown's committee on monetary union. Horribly simplified, it goes something like this: we're not really sure whether EMU is a good thing or not, but what we are sure of is that if it does go ahead and we are not in, then that will be bad for Britain. In other words, if you can't beat them, join them.

The new view, championed by business leaders such as Messrs Fitzgerald and Simon, is much more positively pro-EMU. EMU is a good thing, we should definitely be in from the start, the consequences would be dire if we were not. As always, the message has to be exaggerated to drive the point home. And yet it is still tempered up to a point.

Most of us British exponents of monetary union are still worried about the timetable. An alarming degree of fudge is required to

meet these very tight self-imposed deadlines. Even accepting that the Maastricht criteria, which in itself is debatable, the massaging of national accounts going on makes it highly questionable that the required convergence is being achieved. If as a consequence, EMU falls apart within a few years of start-up, that will be the end of it, if not for good, certainly for a generation or more.

If you believe in EMU, which many of our world-class companies do, then it is by no means a contradiction to think that we are also moving much too swiftly towards it. The fact that we are is a Franco-German mistake. Helmut Kohl, the German chancellor, wouldn't be caught dead admitting it, of course, but close observers of these things have noted an ever so slight shift in his position in recent months. Egged on by the Bundesbank, guardian of the strong Deutsche mark, it is just remotely possible he is preparing to adjust his position and put back the timetable: a year or two.

That may be wishful thinking, of course, but it shouldn't stop our leading companies arguing for it. We cannot afford to back something as important as this. If, as a Brit, it is hard to say this with much conviction, that is only because we all still feel too much like the outsider, proselytising about somebody else's club. If we said it as committed Europeans, then we might actually get heard.

## Bloomberg to run 24-hour news

MATTHEW HORSMAN  
Media Editor

Bloomberg, the financial data company, is to launch a 24-hour all-news channel in the UK next year, as part of the BSkyB digital multichannel package.

The company, owned 70 per cent by former merchant banker Michael Bloomberg, is also linking up European deals to carry localised versions of its television

service, which is already available in the US. A French-language service will be launched on 18 November as part of the Canal Plus package.

Bloomberg-branded television is already broadcast on a limited basis in the UK, including on Sky News. But the 24-hour format will be made possible by the greatly expanded capacity afforded by BSkyB's digital satellite service,

due to be launched in the autumn of 1997.

Sky is expected to launch with at least 100 channels, adding other services over time. In addition to its analogue range, which is likely to migrate to the digital platform, Sky has signed deals with other broadcasters to join the digital bouquet in time for the launch.

There are also plans to offer pay-per-view sport and films, as well as Internet connections and electronic banking.

The Bloomberg television channel will be produced in London, at the company's City offices. Mr Bloomberg, who confirmed the digital plans in an interview with the *Independent*, conceded that television revenues are likely to be small next to the £930m the company earned last year from the sale of its terminals and related financial information services.

"It's hard to see what you might call the media businesses generating anything like the business that the terminals generate," Mr Bloomberg said. "That part of our business is growing at 30 per cent. We'd have to be awfully successful at television to come close to that."

## Sky prepares to launch digital television boxes

BSkyB is poised to announce the launch of its set-top box for digital satellite and will select three manufacturers to supply the equipment within two weeks, writes Mathew Horsman. Pace Microtechnology is expected to be a preferred supplier.

The boxes, which will allow subscribers to receive Sky's digital television service, will also include a high-speed modem for Internet connection. BSkyB has the backing of telecoms giant BT and Barclays Bank. BSkyB hopes to attract the help of manufacturers and

retailers to ensure the boxes cost no more than £200, despite indications that the current retail price for similar equipment is about £400.

BSkyB has developed a dual-track strategy to sell digital equipment through the high street and to supply boxes directly to analogue customers who want to upgrade to digital. The company is eager to profit its 3.8 million analogue subscriber base, even as it attempts to convert as many as possible to the new digital service.

## Majestic plans to float on AIM

TOM STEVENSON  
City Editor

Majestic Wine, the UK's largest wine warehouse chain, is planning a flotation on the Alternative Investment Market next month to fund expansion of its 59 outlets out of the company's south of England heartland.

Raising £2m of new money, the flotation will put a value of about £20m on the company, which will be 70 per cent owned by John Aptorp, the 61-year-old founder of Bejan, who ran the freezer stores group for 20 years until its acquisition by Iceland in 1989.

Majestic, which made operating profits before exceptional items of £1.24m in the year to April from sales of £40.1m, emerged from the combination of Majestic Wine Warehouses with Wizard Wine, formerly part of Iceland, in 1991. It accounts for just under 2 per cent of the still wine sold in Iceland and 6 per cent of champagne sales.

Majestic differentiates itself from high street off-licences and supermarkets with an emphasis on customer service – 80 per cent of its staff are graduates – a wide stock range, on-site parking, the ability to taste wines every day and free delivery.

Since 1994, pre-exceptional profits have grown from £449,000. Pro-forma earnings per share of 3.9p that year grew to 6.6p in 1995 and 9.7p in the year to last April.

The average spend per customer at a Majestic warehouse was £84 last year, reflecting the requirement to buy at least one case per purchase and a tendency for the group's predominantly middle-aged target audience to buy increasingly expensive wines. More than half the wines sold at Majestic are from France, with 27 per cent from the New World.

**IN BRIEF**

**Forget Liverpool or Everton. This is the best team on Merseyside."**

When the production line started rolling, Johnson saw one or two things you rarely see coming off a conveyor belt.

Team spirit. Initiative. People who cared about their company.

Their working methods have proved so successful that Johnsons have used some of their Merseyside workforce as consultants in developing their production line in Dagenham.

**"I would like to take my workforce with me - wherever I go."**

But the enthusiasm, teamwork and 'can-do' attitude you find on Merseyside aren't restricted to Johnson Controls.

Ask the management teams at other car component companies, like Delco Electronics, Champion Spark Plugs and Mackie Automotives.

Outside the car business, ask oil and gas exploration company BHP, Glaxo, BICC or Kodak. You really can ask them. As a new investor on Merseyside, you're invited to join a regular forum who pool their knowledge of the region and share those experiences with you.

And ask them about Merseyside's financial incentives, training assistance and site availability. Or the R&D opportunities with the two world class Universities.

But what about the team at Johnson?

They met their first production target way ahead of schedule. No surprises there. After all, Merseysiders have always been focused on getting their goals.

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**OUR MERSEYSIDE WORKFORCE IS ENERGETIC, WITH POSITIVE IDEAS FLYING AROUND THE PLANT. THEY ARE EXCELLENT TEAM PLAYERS**



ROGER CLIFFORD  
PLANT MANAGER, JOHNSON CONTROLS AUTOMOTIVE (UK) LIMITED

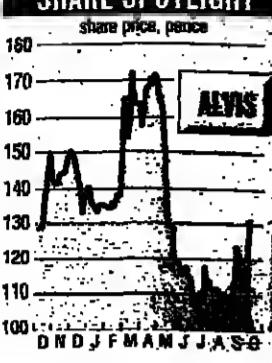
**MERSEYSIDE**  
A 'pool  
of talent

# market report / shares

## DATA BANK

FTSE 100  
4028.1+33.4  
FTSE 250  
4443.8+11.0  
FTSE 350  
2004.0+14.2  
SEAO VOLUME  
644.5m shares,  
38,886 bargains  
Gilt's Index  
1/2

## SHARE SPOTLIGHT



# BSkyB reaches new heights after American buying

Blue chips closed at their high for the day after Wall Street surged 50 points on the back of positive sentiment about the US interest rate outlook after benign retail sales data. The FTSE 100 index ended the week at 4028.1, up 33.4 and just seven points shy of another all-time closing high.

Further US buying pushed satellite broadcaster BSkyB 265p higher at 650p, a new record. Technical analysts also noted that the shares had recently broken through chart resistance at 600p.

BSkyB is also a very tightly-held stock. Just four shareholders speak for 72 per cent of the shares, so it does not take many traders to be caught short to squeeze the price higher.

Rolls-Royce roared ahead 7p to 254.5p on hefty volumes of 11.4 million. After US plane maker Boeing said the Federal Aviation Administration had granted initial approval to its

777 airliners powered by Rolls-Royce's Trent 800 engines. A buy note from SBC Warburg also helped.

The retail sector was generally buoyant after a survey from the CBI showing a rise in September retail sales, albeit at a slower pace than in August. However, J Sainsbury remained shunned ahead of interim results at the end of the month. BZW added to the recent clutch of negative broker comments by issuing a sell note, while switching to Tesco, 4p up at 317p, was also noted.

With only 73 shopping days left to Christmas, brokers' thoughts are turning to the general retail sector, which has underperformed the stock market by 4 per cent since July. NatWest thinks this has been overdone and highlighted several shares, notably Dixons, which rose 25p to 567p, making it the best FT 100 performer of the day.

The reports drove United's shares to a record high of 513.5p, up £513.5m valuing the club at over £318m.

Media and leisure group Granada, brewer Whitbread and Lord Hollick's United News & Media were mentioned as having expressed an interest in buying United, but all three companies denied the story.

Enterprise Oil firmed 18.5p to 587.5p as analysts returned from a trip to see its Italian operations and investment bank Robert Fleming upgraded its net asset value from 600p to 800p.

Manchester United, preparing for this morning's top-of-the-table clash at Old Trafford with arch-rivals Liverpool, proved the old adage that football is a funny old game. Chief executive Martin Edwards was quoted as saying that the club was a likely bid target and that any proposals would be given serious consideration if offers started at over £400m. The reports drove United's shares to a record high of 513.5p, up £513.5m valuing the club at over £318m.

Media, leisure group

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## MARKET REPORT

PATRICK TOOHER

Out-of-favour Matthew Clark's food division, Shares in the cider group, which recently issued a profits warning citing the adverse impact of "sclops" on its Baby- chain, K and Diamond brands, hit a six-year low of 267.5p in early trade. Overnight activity in the options market was blamed. But nerves were soothed after the Stock Exchange saw publication of a block trade of 1.95 million shares at 310p transacted on 3 October, which may have been delayed from two days ago. The shares ended 4.5p down at 309.5p.

Shares in Alvis rose 11.5p to 131p. Traders noted a number of large buy orders from Europe on hopes that Alvis is close to securing a significant contract with the Ministry of Defence in the near future. Alvis, number three behind GKN and Vickers in the UK armoured vehicle market, has

been starved of defence orders in recent months but investors clearly think in turn for a lucrative contract may be just around the corner.

Speculation continued to swirl around exhibitions group BISpiebeam, 1.5p higher at 484p. One story suggested that Anglo-Dutch publisher Reed Elsevier was getting cold feet about making a full bid. Another suggested rival Dutch publisher VNU, which picked up a near-15 per cent stake at 310p in a recent "down raid" would re-enter the market next week and buy more shares.

Artores rose 13p to 606.5p after setting up a new tour operating unit in California. And shares in USM-listed recruitment consultant Select Appointments rose 32p to 370p after unveiling plans to list on the junior Nasdaq stock market. It also posted a doubling of interim pre-tax profits to £8m.

## TAKING STOCK

Shares in loudspeaker maker Verity struck another high note, rising 0.75p to 30.5p. Private investors are piling into the stock on hopes that Verity's new, wafer-thin NXT loudspeakers will be licensed to the likes of Nokia or Panasonic. Verity is exhibiting its wares at the Birmingham motor show on Tuesday.

Campbell & Armstrong, returned from a two-month suspension, fell 3.75p to 67.75p as the shopfitter unveiled plans to place 65 million shares at 5p each to raise £2.77m. A debt-for-equity swap and a reorganisation of the group's borrowings are also planned. In the 13 months to January, pre-tax losses rose to £7.96m. Irwin, the contracting division put into administration in January was responsible for 25.2m of the shortfall.

## Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items.

Offer Price = Ex-right or Ex-dividend; x All or Unlisted Securities Market's Suspended Source: FT Information

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Stock Price Chg. % Yield P/E Ratio





RUGBY UNION: Britain finally goes fully Continental as the Heineken Cup starts today. Chris Hewett reports

## Europeans' currency of progress

It may be tempting providence to say so, but not even the committee room politicians can mess this one up. English club rugby's first serious venture into Europe begins this afternoon and the fact that it is being undertaken more in the spirit of Kenneth Clarke than Michael Portillo suggests that the Heineken Cup is already being seen as a watershed for the game in the northern hemisphere.

After years of half-baked invitational competitions and last season's lightweight but ultimately thrilling inaugural Heineken tournament, won by Toulouse in vintage style, we are finally about to embark on a Euro Championship worthy of the name. Twenty sides from six countries, armed to the teeth with some 180 full internationals and bolstered by mighty traditions of domestic achievement? The visionaries have been dreaming of this for decades.

Visionaries like Brian Ashton, the coach of English champions, Bath, and an unashamed Europhile of long-standing, Ashton spent part of his coaching apprenticeship in Italy in the mid-1970s. "I remember when he was still in short trousers," he says, keenly aware that the respected centre will be one of the key playmakers for national champions Milan in the coming weeks of the campaign – and found it one of the most invigorating experiences of his career. Now, he is looking forward to similar fulfilment.

"It's the only direction for rugby to follow if we're even remotely serious about competing on the world stage. At Bath, we've been pushing for a European dimension to the English season for as long as I can remember, hence our matches against sides like Dinamo Bucharest, Treviso and Toulouse. It's natural territory for us, as it should be for any ambitious club."

The sense of anticipation is

almost tangible at the Recreation Ground, where Bath open their campaign against the Edinburgh district side today. "Thank God we're playing someone different for once," Ashton said. "We're away from the grind of over-familiarity for a few weeks and it's a wonderfully positive feeling." Whether the Scots return home in a positive frame of mind depends on how they survive what is certain to be as severe a test of character as it will be of technique.

Scott Hastings, captain of a young and untested Edinburgh side, fears that having identified this tournament as a top priority, Bath will be in unforgiving mood this afternoon. But even if the odd early match turns out to be embarrassingly one-sided, the quality of rugby will leave the domestic leagues for dead once the cream begins to rise. If you require proof, cast an eye over the contestants in Pool D, the Heineken Cup's equivalent of the Group of Death.

Both of last year's finalists, Toulouse and Cardiff, are involved in the most competitive of the four pools and when the two sides resume hostilities at Les Sept-Demiers a week today, the cast will be close to international strength – Emile Ntamack, Thomas Castaignede and Christian Califano against Leigh Davies, Rob Howley and Jonathan Humphreys. But Lawrence Dallaglio's Wasps are also in the frame – they play Cardiff at Loftus Road tomorrow – as are Milan with their 17 Italian Test players and the wild cards from Munster, Wasps, well fancied for a place in the last eight, must go to Thomond Park in Limerick next weekend and as Eddie Kirton, the former All Black stand-off and coach once remarked, "When you play Munster there you begin to appreciate how the Christians felt in the Colosseum."

It looks every bit as tight in Pool B, where Leicester's unusually fragile start to the season leaves them seriously

vulnerable to both Llanelli and Pau, who have not won the French championship since 1964 but are now equipped with the most calculatedly aggressive pack in mainland Europe. With Brive, runners-up to Toulouse in France last season, lying in wait for countrymen Laurent Benezeth and Laurent Cabannes and the rest of the Harlequins multifunctional conglomerate in Pool C, and both Dan and Pontypridd looking to hurt Bath in Pool A, both on the shape of next month's quarter-finals are risky at best. This is being rugby, a degree of uncertainty remains; but one has the faintest idea how successful the second-siting European Conference will be – the 24-club competition is also launched today – while organisers and players involved in the main event have been tip-toeing

around a variety of landmarks all week. The wrangle over television coverage, or lack of it, continues in the wake of ITV's last-minute withdrawal while the legions of Irishmen playing their league rugby in England are still between a rock and a hard place. If they defend their clubs and play for their provinces in Europe, as several intend to do, they risk being held in breach of contract; if they play the opposite view, their international futures might fall prey to vindictive selectors.

There are even bigger issues

leading clubs next season are likely to meet stiff opposition from domestic protectionists, or lack of it, continues in the wake of ITV's last-minute withdrawal while the legions of Irishmen playing their league rugby in England are still between a rock and a hard place. If they defend their clubs and play for their provinces in Europe, as several intend to do, they risk being held in breach of contract; if they play the opposite view, their international futures might fall prey to vindictive selectors.

Yet a fair and equitable distribution of television money would do more than anything to strengthen club rugby in both Ireland and Scotland. Leading players might just be lured back over the Irish Sea or Hadrian's Wall, thus easing Cotton's concerns over an English domestic game effectively hijacked by foreigners.

As David Robson, one of Ashton's predecessors at Bath, used to say: "You never stand still in rugby. You either go forward or you fall behind." The Europhobes might not like the idea of a single currency in any sphere of activity. But among the top club sides, that currency already exists. It goes by the name of progress.

Travis's players practise at Sofia Gardens, Cardiff, before today's European Cup match against Pontypridd

from Shannon, Garryowen, West-southern or even Melrose could live with Harlequins or Toulouse on a week-by-week basis.

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The Europhobes might not like the idea of a single currency in any sphere of activity. But among the top club sides, that currency already exists. It goes by the name of progress.

Travis's players practise at Sofia Gardens, Cardiff, before today's European Cup match against Pontypridd

from Shannon, Garryowen, West-southern or even Melrose could live with Harlequins or Toulouse on a week-by-week basis.

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## sport

**WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SHOWDOWN:** When Damon Hill sets out on his quest for the Formula One drivers' title tomorrow he will be aware of the Japanese Grand Prix's rich history of drama and controversy. **Derick Allsop** recalls some of the highlights

# Suzuka set to become land of the rising son

**H**istory offers Damon Hill mixed portents as he seeks to rise among the legends in Japan tomorrow. He will become Britain's eighth world champion and the first son of a title winner to reach the pinnacle of motor racing if he finishes in the top six or his Williams-Renault team-mate and only rival, Jacques Villeneuve, fails to win the Japanese Grand Prix.

The odds therefore are overwhelmingly in Hill's favour, but Japan has staged some of Formula One's more dramatic and controversial deciders and Hill will be acutely conscious of the possible vagaries.

Circumstances conspired to bestow the championship on another Briton, James Hunt, in the wet and gloom beneath Mount Fuji 20 years ago. Niki Lauda, his eyes and nerves still vulnerable after that horrific crash at the Nürburgring, withdrew his car early in the race and with it any control over the destiny of the crown.

### Senna's critics instantly condemned the Brazilian's impetuosity

Hunt, having forced a contest out of a seemingly lost cause – much as Villeneuve has this season – still feared he had not done enough amid scenes of extreme tension and confusion at the end. Eventually he was persuaded he had finished third, and, won the championship.

Formula One returned to Japan after a 10-year absence in 1987, but at a different circuit, Suzuka, with its distinctly figure of eight layout, has been on the grand prix calendar ever since.

That inaugural race marked the end of another title bid by Nigel Mansell, who had been thwarted by a spectacular tyre blow-out at Adelaide the previous season. This time he was trailing his Williams team-mate, Nelson Piquet, and sought victory at Suzuka to sustain his hopes.

During practice, however, he crashed heavily and, as he was lifted from the car and taken to hospital,

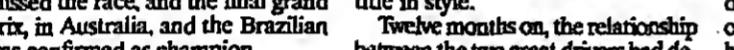
1987 – Mansell crashes out in practice



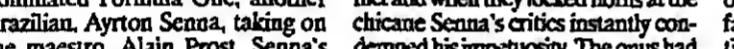
1989 – Prost and Senna tangle



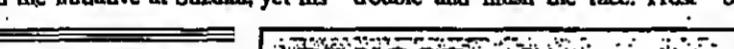
1990 – Senna and Prost collide again



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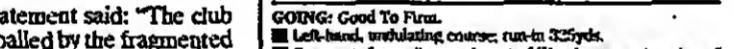
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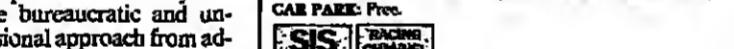
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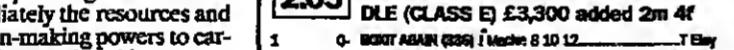
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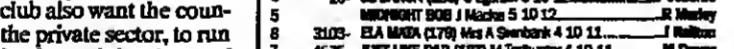
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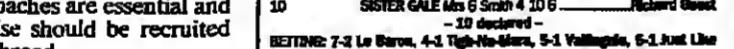
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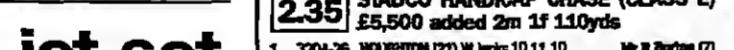
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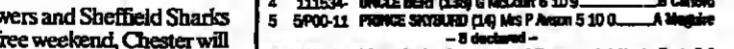
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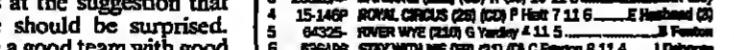
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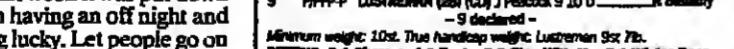
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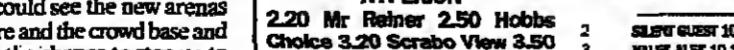
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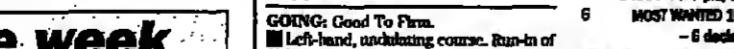
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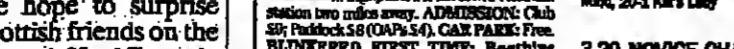
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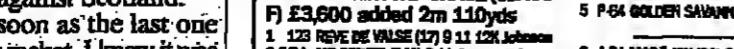
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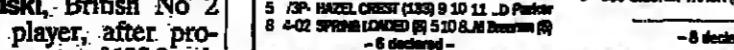
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# Dettori hopes may go up the Spout

## Racing

GREG WOOD

Punters get the chance to increase their self-knowledge this morning, such is the disparity between this afternoon's two televised meetings.

There is Ascot, which offers useful horses, manageable fields and the clear hope of finding a winner or two without undue difficulty, and then there is York, where the smallest cast list for a televised handicap runs to 23 names. Study the options and ask yourself honestly: am I an Ascot or a York person? The answer should reveal whether you have any serious wish to break even, or are simply one of the tens of thousands of mug-punters who are the lifeblood of bookmaking.

The problem, of course, is that while many of us like to think we are Ascot types, there is a strong Yorkist streak in most backer's souls which few can

suppress, not least when it is just a fortnight since the bookies were finally forced to cough up a few million pounds after 35 years of outrageous profiteering from Grahame and Super Yankees.

Today's card at the Yorkshire track is not nearly so competitive as the one which Lanfranco Dettori went straight through 14 days ago, but while the Italian again has seven rides this afternoon, it is a measure of the magnitude of that achievement that his chance of emulating it is effectively nil.

The remaining three televised events at Ascot offer betting op-

portunities for backers if not for Dettori. Easycall, who has had a busy year, must be vulnerable under a 6lb penalty in the Cornwall Stakes, and while Carmine Lake ran particularly well to finish fifth in the Prix de l'Abbaye last Sunday, the proximity of that race must be a worry. The value alternative is Mellish (2.30), who has finally started to turn early-season promise into results and may have more improvement to come.

Atzumura, possibly Dettori's best chance of a winner this afternoon, will be strongly fancied to follow up a recent course victory in the Princess Royal Stakes, but John Gosden, her trainer, hinted yesterday that Spout (next best 3.00) and Partner are dangers and it is the former, another course-and-distance winner, who can prevail.

Previous Ascot form also points to an excellent bet in the sprint handicap, Bolshoi, who improved rapidly since Emma O'Gorman became his regular partner earlier this year, and his second victory at the track, 13 days ago, was his finest performance yet. The bookmakers

fancy Samwar, second that day, to reverse the form, but at around 10-1, BOLSHOI (nap 3.35) can again prove superior.

As for York, Russian roulette would be a useful gambling medium, though Nightbird (3.15) should win the Listed juvenile event, and it is worth noting that Alex Greaves' Bolshoi is reunited with Pride of Pendle in the nine furlong handicap, in which several fancied runners have a dangerously high draw. The hopelessness of any attempt to solve the remaining races is demonstrated by the fact that *7mform*'s adjusted ratings for the 4.45, there is no more than 8lb between all 27 runners.

British interest abroad centres on Longchamp, where Peter Chapple-Hyam's Revoult to tackles the Grand Critérium. Further afield, Irish Stamp should secure another British win in the Czech Republic's Velká Pardubická, in which last year's winner, I'ts A Snip, will be appointed to the Tote board for a year initially.

Martin We simply want to be more involved with our horses."

■ The Tote has announced the retirement of its chief executive, Brian McDowell, after 15 years in the post. He will be succeeded by John Heaton, who will be appointed to the Tote board for a year initially.

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John Walsh meets...  
John Fuller

# Full of feeling

**A**t 7.40 pm on Wednesday evening, in the Groucho Club's crammed and sweaty Soho Room, they named the country's best poet. The judges of the classy, Bookerish Forward Prize looked at a shortlist of new poetry collections, that included the work of last year's Nobel laureate Seamus Heaney, and decided to hand the £10,000 prize money to John Fuller, for his book *Stones and Fires* (Chatto).

Poets don't get in the news much. They have to be Nobel prizewinners, or suspected pornographers, or the creators of the "nation's favourite poem" before they out a quiver in the oedeme of public awareness. Fuller's sudden *réclame* will make few headlines outside the literary pages of the broadsheet papers; but to a hefty percentage of the country's most notable versifiers, he has been their mentor, impresario and chief of men.

As Professor of English Literature at Magdalen College, Oxford, for the last 30 years, he has seen a bewildering number of his students become poets, and writers - many of them published for the first time by Fuller, himself, to his tiny Sycamore Press imprint. The Fuller Gang amounts to a literary generation of writers in positions of power: Jackie Fenton, now Professor of Poetry at Oxford (like Fuller's father, Roy), Alan Jenkins and Alan Hollinghurst, both prizewinning authors and presiding spirits for years at the *Times Literary Supplement*; Mick Imlah the poet and former poetry editor at Chatto & Windus, now also at the *TLS*; Andrew Motion, the multi-faceted poet, novelist and Larkin biographer, now Professor of Creative Writing at East Anglia... A conspiracy theorist might infer from this roll-call that some Parnassian Cosa Nostra has been operating for years, stretching from Magdalen's draughty cloisters to the heart of Grub Street, and they'd probably be right. But you can't blame Fuller for that. He does not (like, say, Leavis) send his acolytes into the world to spread some moral message, nor (like, say, Eric Griffiths at Cambridge) send them out to become vitriolic critics and media busters. Fuller's influence is far more benign and creative. He has played the role of guru, exemplar and *cher maître* for so long, he has quite forgotten to give himself the airs that go with it.

"I'm not sure about prizes," he said, when we met the next day, which was National Poetry Day. "I don't know how far you can seriously raise public consciousness about poetry. Having a 'National Poetry Day', like a No Smoking Day, is just shoving the problem. Things which should by rights be every day are not best served by these things." He is happy, however, by the way poetry's profile has changed since he started out in 1961 with his debut collection, *Fairground Music*. "When I began, poetry was very academic. You published little pamphlets from fancy presses. It was rather... chaste. There wasn't much public reading. Then there was poetry and jazz, which I don't think worked, though I love jazz. Then there was the moment when the American Beat poets arrived in Oxford in 1957, and were very charming and exciting... But you get these jurches towards popularity all the time. In the Thirties, don't forget, you had Auden putting poetry on the cinema screen, with Grierson and the GPO film unit. Whenever there's a move like that, I think it's very healthy. It's always good to show that poetry isn't the little depressed lyric people believe it to be, that it's something bigger."

"Little depressed lyrics" are not what you get from Mr

**"Urbanity? You know what urbanity means? It means two men who live in the same city who are able to talk to each other in the same language"**

"I have written public poems before," said Fuller, "but yes, this sonnet sequence is new to me. I was very affected by the Bosnian conflict right back in its early days, say 1991/2. I found myself profoundly affected by things I was reading about and seeing - in particular, a photograph of someone having their head cut off with a saw. I was on holiday in Corsica at the time, just lounging around, and started writing these sonnets. It was something to do with the distance I was from home, about being in the Mediterranean, in the middle of Europe, and being able suddenly to think about the place in some kind of perspective, while being very troubled about Bosnia..."

*Stones and Fires*, the prize-winning collection, offers something new to Fuller fans: the spectacle of a poet becoming simultaneously more public and more private than they had encountered before. The judges' chairman, Alan Jenkins (that's right, one of Fuller's ex-students; but an incorruptible chap and a previous Forward winner) was in raptures: "The book has all the virtues Fuller's known for, the verbal richness, the wit, the dandyishness, but there's also a lot of deep feeling - grief, sorrow, a kind of world-woe - coming strongly through the poems. The subjects aren't altogether new but you feel there's a deeper connection with events and with the loss he's suffered

from doing so. But what it contains at its heart is a form of truth about emotions or feelings which is to a degree generalised or hypothesised or fictionalised. There are long poems of mine that are full of feeling, but transposed, that are one step away from anything I might say in my own voice." He shook his head. "Quite honestly I don't understand what more people require of you."

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"It struck me that the language of the sonnets displayed a cold fury, a disgust with 'Europe's striking ampit and unravelling sleeve' (which I took to mean the Balkans) that's pitched some way from his usual cool urbanity. Fuller jumped on the word like a policeman. "Urbanity? You know what urbanity means? It means two men who live in the same city who are able to talk to each other in the same language

to each other in the same language. I think any writer - any citizen - feels that if we do that enough, we probably won't cut off each other's heads with a saw..." It's the myth of nationhood he most detests, the revival of ancient tribal hatreds - a Europe which becomes "one ethnic group torturing another ethnic group out of some ridiculous, spurious ideal. It's so depressing."

Fuller is 60 next year, but

he doesn't look it. (He looks, in fact, like a retired gangster in a television cop series: he'd suit a Pringle sweatshirt and a set of knuckledusters). One studies his face for signs that he is turning into his father, Roy Fuller, the poet, who famously held a career in a building society all his life; but the father's lean features and galloping-major moustache belong to another generation. "He played a kind of role as Corporation Man," remembers the son fondly. "He liked his professional life. He was very good on committees, unexpectedly gregarious. He was a shy man, but he came to life in the Woolwich, which he cared for enormously. He hated the way building societies were teeing off his moustache because you weren't sup-

posed to have moustaches in basic training." John was an only child. He spent the war years in Blackpool with his mother and her mother, then the family moved south at the end of the war and settled in south London. "We came back a bit too early - I remember a V2 rocket blew our windows out in Blackheath." The war provided him with a slew of images that appeared in later work, especially in *The Burning Boys*, which opens with a small boy spying from a cupboard as his sexy aunt and her friend take turns weighing their breasts in the kitchen scales.

"And I remember newsstands of *Collected Poems* published next year, a new generation of aspirant bards to be guided and calmed down, a fresh set of projects, new poetic forms to tackle ("I found the Pushkin stanza very difficult," he confesses, "but I took it that the difficulty it created was part of the point..."). A prodigious and apparently tireless maker, he is a one-man assembly line of poetry, in which every invention is a refinement of the last, and technical brilliance is only a means to an end. "I think a lot of the things I do luckily don't get noticed, and I'm glad," he said finally. "A poem should be just a thing you read and it should work on you. You shouldn't be able to see the machinery."

"It as an unusual poem for me because it uses a real letter that I'd written to my father," said Fuller. "When my mother died, I got a whole lot of papers, and I didn't remember writing this letter.

"It struck me that the language of the sonnets displayed a cold fury, a disgust with 'Europe's striking ampit and unravelling sleeve' (which I took to mean the Balkans) that's pitched some way from his usual cool urbanity. Fuller jumped on the word like a policeman. "Urbanity? You know what urbanity means? It means two men who live in the same city who are able to talk to each other in the same language



TONY BURNHAM

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# arts & books



Family ties: Lorraine Ashbourne as May in 'Fool for Love'

Photo: Gernant Lewis

## How's your father?

THEATRE *Fool for Love*, Donmar Warehouse, London

I've heard of keeping it in the family, but this is ridiculous. Having just played Jocasta, mum and wife to Oedipus, that terrific actress Lorraine Ashbourne, heads straight into the role of May, the woman who has much more than a blood bond with her half-brother in Sam Shepard's *Fool for Love*. It's only a matter of time before Ms Ashbourne makes her operatic debut as Sieglinde.

In Ian Brown's revival at the Donmar Warehouse, the actress is partnered by Barry Lynch, who plays rodeo rider Eddie, the sibling who has tracked her down to a godforsaken motel room on the edge of the Mojave Desert and is doomed to go on loving her and leaving her for ever. These are two of my favourite performers and they pull off certain riffs of extraordinary intensity here. But, as with all the English productions I've ever seen of this author's work, I kept getting the uncomfortable sense that what I was witnessing was actually a talented team on *Whose Line Is It Anyway?* who'd been told to improvise a Sam Shepard play. American actors have equivalent difficulties with the pauses and elaborately veiled power games of Harold Pinter.

Before *Fool for Love*, a Shepard play in which the woman gets as good a dramatic deal as the man seemed about as likely a proposition as a refuge for battered wives run by Ernest Hemingway. In Brown's production, though, the balance arguably swings too much in May's favour. The look-at-me, insecure swagger of Lynch's macho preenings – all that show-off lassoing of the bed knobs and the ludicrously phallic cleaning of his shot-

gun – is exquisitely funny and pathetic. But, to my mind, it showed us this character from May's point of view and not enough from his own. Lynch is better at projecting the calm, dangerous insolence with which Eddie runs laconic, self-amused rings round the ill-at-ease, slow-witted hunk (very well played by Martin Marquez) who comes to call on May and gets treated to the dreadful story of how their incest arose and the resulting suicide of Eddie's mother.

The drama takes place under the monitoring eye of the Old Man (Gawn Grainger) who fathered them – an irresponsible phantom who interrupts the action with his special pleadings and his shifty, highly American championing of fantasy over fact. Brown's production is at its most powerful when this figure forsakes his lofty chair and enters the motel room, creating a wonderful circuit of quiet disturbing energy as he gazes at his daughter gazing at her brother / lover. At first invading the space with a misplaced proprietorial confidence (adopting a position on the bed that brazenly mirrors the one his son took up), the Old Man is eventually reduced to a cowardly, unloved wriggling as he tries to evade facing up to the terrible consequences of his stubborn, deluded individualism. Less than utterly convincing in her wall-banging paroxysms of demented frustration earlier in the play, Ashbourne beautifully transmits the drained stoical realism of May at the end. The spectre of *Whose Line Is It Anyway?* vanishes completely.

To 30 Nov. Donmar Warehouse, London WC2 (0171-369 1732)

By Paul Taylor

## Clive and kicking



Jasper Rees on Television

There's something iffy about the BBC simply buying programmes ready-made from a rival channel. Whatever the licence fee is for, you suspect it's not meant to be siphoned into big-money transfers. In importing Clive Anderson from Channel 4 after Clive James had already exported himself to ITV, BBC1 has plainly chosen to do unto others as it has done unto itself. They swiped our Clive: we'll have yours.

So, business as usual for Clive Anderson All Talk (BBC1, Sun). No one would stump up umpteen quid to play Alan Shearer in the midfield holding role, and the Beeth nash the last surviving chat-show host to front a legal queries phone-in. To make him feel as if he hasn't moved at all, the set has undergone only subtle modifications: a handyman has shifted a couple of planks, maybe changed the odd lightbulb. In one bold innovation, the rancid stand-up routine is now delivered from behind the desk. But the gag about the names of Paula Yates's children was a clear signal that the show plans to make nostalgic expeditions to familiar pastures.

The guest list had a formulaic look about it: as usual, one crackpot and two moneypots (roped on to flog their wares, Madame Vasso's evasions gave Anderson a rare chance to prove that he really did use to be a barrister, a claim we've always had to take on trust. He's actually a lawyer in the same way that Adam Faith is a rock star. Dash (C4, Thurs), a kind of *Money Programme* for financial neanderthals, would not have been made if Faith hadn't once had a sexier job. Similarly, Anderson could never sell himself as this dull, half-man-without-qualities if he hadn't been at the bar in another life.

Except Madame Vasso wasn't playing ball, crystal or otherwise, Fergiegate being, as far as she was concerned, *sub judice*. And somehow it looks as if a gagging order has been slapped on Anderson, too. Although he was hired as the only chatshow host prepared to be rude without donning the armchair-plating of a fictional personality, the BBC can less afford to offend guests than Channel 4. Hence Anderson could be as cruel as he liked to Madame Vasso, who will soon no doubt disappear for good into the hole she crawled out of. But Ben Elton went mysteriously untrumped for using the royal we (of the Duchess of York's royal we). And Eddie Murphy was

never invited to explain, as he would have been at Anderson's old address, why these days his films are so crap.

*Equinax* (C4, Sun), investigating transport disasters, grippingly argued that some of us are better equipped by biology than others to flee a flaming aircraft or jump a sinking ship. The findings can be pretty accurately transplanted to television. Just how do presenters cope when a vehicle designed for their sole use simply goes up in smoke, or suddenly capsizes? Disaster survivors, it was argued, tend to be both highly extrovert and deeply psychotic. Meaning, roughly translated, that they're nifty at elbowing other people out of the way. As they rushed to save their own lives, some survivors reported going on to autopilot and seeing in tunnel vision, a sensation that autocue readers experience on a daily basis. Look at the way Anderson effortlessly survived the ill-fated *Notes and Queries*, which sank without trace. One day Clive James, doubtless, will take the Murdoch shilling, and Clive Anderson will transplant his show to ITV: in the light of *Equinax*'s research, he could call it *Clive and Kicking*.

In National Wonderbox Week, Playtex have been very publicly donating £1 to breast cancer research for every underwired cleavage enhancer sold. Less widely reported is their pocketing of the other £19. That's a big sack of potatoes, as they say in Madame Vasso's house. But Playtex are not clear winners in the hit war. Her profile boosted by modelling for Gossard, Sophie Ander-

ton has landed a job presenting *Desire* (C4, Thurs), a mildly irreverent new fashion magazine. It's unclear what qualifications she brings for a start, she is required to wear clothes, not something she's previously achieved in public before. With her commodities concealed, your vision is diverted to a pair of playful eyebrows that jiggle up and down with clockwork regularity. You can almost hear a producer off-camera exhorting her to look animated. Either that, or she's mentally clearing a set of sleeping policemen embedded in the autocue.

*Theft Takers* (ITV, Thurs) is back with new recruit Amanda Pays. Pays is one of those actors who has somehow ended up famous for no particular reason. Whatever she was known for before, it wasn't for thwacking down doors in the peaked cap of a Met marksperson. Her presence here does nothing to overturn the impression that *Theft Takers* is a newspaper cartoon strip. As soon as she appeared, you wanted to place a bet on how soon two male colleagues would place a bet on who'd get into her knicker first. (More sleeping policemen. And just as lifelike.) Unfortunately, they'd made their wager so quickly you didn't even have time to get your potatos out.

Pays will presumably attract the thinking man's vote in next year's National Television Awards. The oddity of this year's awards (ITV, Wed) was that the presenter, Trevor McDonald, also picked up a gong. "And the winner is ... me!" He'd obviously have no trouble crawling from a smoking wreckage. Across the Atlantic, though, they make their oddities bigger and bolder. Vince Gill, who presented the 1996 Country Music Awards (BBC2, Sat), was nominated for seven of them, and won two (the second with Dolly Parton. Who, it was confirmed in the Chancellor's Bournemouth speech, is definitely not a Wonderbra woman.)

The CMAs, incidentally, cleared up the mystery of how come Madame Vasso's potatoeß former client is forever flying Concorde to the States. In Nashville, a portly woman with a larval flow of incandescent red hair came on stage and made a lot of noise. Wynonna, a country superstar with *muchas patatas*, has never been seen in Britain. Could they in some mysterious way be the same person? *By*



Robert Hanks on Radio

Look how shrewdly they've co-opted the word "healing", with the slight but inescapable implication that healing is what doctors fail to do. Most of all, they've got simplicity on their side – it all seems so transparent.

The fact is, healing is about as transparent as fog. Some of what Watts was told here was superficially logical gibberish – like the man who claimed that conventional medicine hasn't learnt the lessons of modern physics concerning the interconvertibility of matter and energy: the body can be addressed as energy just as it can be addressed as matter (well, horseshit can be converted into food, but that doesn't mean you can eat it). More of it didn't even pretend to be rational – indeed, it flaunted its irrationality, knowing that this is attractive to many people. It's very hard for the scientific mind to grapple with snarling impossibly about returning to the Middle Ages.

Contrast this with *Bodies of Evidence* (Radio 4, Weds), in which Tony Robinson asks scientists what millennia-old preserved bodies can tell us. This week it was all about plants and animals – what we can learn from the lumps of moss found

among the clothing of Otzi, the 5,000-year-old Austrian iceman, and from the mistletoe pollen in the stomach of the 2,000-year-old Lindow Man (aka Pete Marsh). The conclusions in both cases were tentative: Otzi may have taken the moss either for insulation or to wipe his bottom; the presence of mistletoe may indicate either ritual slaughter or severe mental difficulties (since it was apparently a popular way of treating fits).

But the joy of this series isn't so much what you find out as the lucidity and enthusiasm with which it is explained to you. Part of the credit must go to Robinson, who abandons some of his more irritating mannerisms to show that he has a knack for reducing complicated matters to simple terms; much of it, you suspect, is a matter of culture. For doctors, technical language can be a way of establishing their authority, both to lay people and to colleagues. For palaeobotanists, who probably don't count many fellow palaeobotanists in their immediate social circle, the ability to explain what they do is a vital social tool.

By the way, the producer of *Bodies of Evidence*, Andrew Johnston, is one of nine radio features producers who have recently

been made redundant in Bristol – in his case, apparently, because the received wisdom at the BBC is that there is no longer a market for the sort of programme he makes. Meanwhile, over at Radio 1, Andy Kershaw has been shifted from his slot on Sunday night between 10 o'clock and midnight, to make way for a new programme called *The Album Show* – mmm, that sounds like a tasty recipe for fresh sounds and musical styles. Kershaw will have a new slot running from midnight until two o'clock on a Monday morning; those listeners who stay up will be able to hear the melancholy sound of him rattling together all those awards he's won in his years at Radio 1. You will notice it make a somewhat hollow sound.

In both cases, what you're seeing is the progressive blinding of the BBC as it worries more and more about appealing to the widest possible audience. The Corporation is retreating from eccentricity, from programmes that tickle the intelligence or offer a little shock of novelty, and falling back on reliable crowd-pleasers. It has lost confidence in the intelligence of the general public and in its own standards. You know what would make it better? A little more faith.

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## The Cunning Little Vixen



### overview



### THE PLAY

Laughter on the 23rd Floor  
Gene Wilder is the star of a 1950s TV satire show written by a bizarre assortment of characters in Roger Haines's production of Neil Simon's autobiographical play, the latest in a stream of his comedies to hit these shores.

David Benedict enjoyed "more successful gags than you have any right to expect". "Wilder can say more with a raise of the eyebrow than four pages of script. A must for comedy-lovers," applauded the *Mirror*. "Could transform Simon's British fortunes. You will laugh a lot," agreed the *Times*. "Wilder ... a masterclass of technique, timing and charm," saluted the *Mail*. "Dir's the word," growled the *Standard*.

At the Queen's Theatre, London W1 (0171-494 5590)

Rolf Saxon runs Wilder a close second in this very American comedy.



### THE MOVIE

Lone Star  
John Sayles's epic crosses the thriller with the Western, interweaving plotlines about mysterious deaths and hidden family histories. With Chris Cooper, Elizabeth Peña and new Hollywood heartthrob Matthew McConaughey

Adam Mars-Jones admired its aims but felt "it badly needs a shot of adrenaline". "Stands head and shoulders above most recent American movies, cheered *Time Out*. "Sayles ... retains all his qualities of intelligence, political acuteness and narrative lucidity," judged *Sight & Sound*. "A richly textured epic," proclaimed the *Times*. "We can only wince at the didactic clumsiness," sighed the *Guardian*.

Cert 15, 135 mins. At the Curzon West End (0171-369 1722) and across the country.

A sprawling but typically iconoclastic film from Sayles.



### THE GIG

Metallica  
The biggest thing to have come out of San Francisco since Armistead Maupin, with whom they have precisely nothing in common. The world's leading heavy metal combo have (gasp) shown their locks and embarked on a UK tour.

Ryan Gilbey giggled at the heavy metal pomposity but "these songs linger in your ears long after the painful ringing has subsided". "An epic set," ejaculated the *Express*. "This relentless assault on the senses did somewhat undersell Metallica's more subtle, complex qualities," whispered the *Times*. "Crude refined noise ... a worn-out pastiche of itself," snorted the *Birmingham Post*.

Earls Court tonight; then Cardiff, Manchester and Sheffield on Mon, Tues and Wed.



### Steve Hill / Newsteam

Steve Gillett

# Living life for the common people

The glue that sticks the nation together or a barrier to the development of a mature democracy? **John Campbell** investigates the role of the Queen in today's society

**The Queen: A Biography of Elizabeth II**  
by Ben Pimlott, HarperCollins, £20

The news that Ben Pimlott was writing a biography of the Queen raised eyebrows. It seemed an incongruous, even perverse, project for a hitherto exclusively Labour historian. Why should he want to do it? Would he have the necessary contacts? What could he possibly bring to a subject already copiously covered by well-connected royal specialists like Elizabeth Longford, Anthony Holden and (earlier this year) Sarah Bradford?

Such doubts reflected a long-standing convention – combining academic snobbery with inverted social snobbery – that serious writers did not bother with the monarchy. The Queen was both personally uninteresting and politically unimportant: not so much beyond criticism – as she was at the beginning of her reign – as beneath it. *The Independent* in its early years had a policy of burying royal stories in three lines at the bottom of page two, or even ignoring them entirely. Elsewhere gossip had replaced gush, but royal-watching was still the preserve of the tabloids.

Today all that has changed. The functions and future of the monarchy are now matters of consuming interest – not least in *The Independent*. (Only members of the Government and Opposition still dare not join in.) By luck or shrewd judgement, Pimlott's book is perfectly timed to give historical focus to this burgeoning debate.

He has succeeded triumphantly in his unlikely project. He has written a book which can be enjoyed and admired by people who would never have imagined reading any previous royal biography. He has done it not by adapting his approach to the conventions of the genre, but by deploying the same skills he has previously brought to Harold Wilson and Hugh Dalton. What he has written is not a "royal biography" at all, but a political biography whose subject happens to be not a Prime Minister or Chancellor of the Exchequer, but Queen. He has got round the problem that so little is known about Her Majesty's private opinions not by speculating on the basis of hints and hearsay but by sticking firmly to the sources he has been able to assemble – which turn out to be surprisingly good. If the result is a study heavily weighted to the monarch's public role, then that is entirely proper in portraying a woman who has almost totally subsumed her private personality in her public duty.

Pimlott is frankly less interested in the Queen herself than in the changing iconography of the monarchy over her lifetime: the way her image has been manufactured and manipulated from babyhood onwards to suit the political needs of the Government and Establishment of the day. This has its personal side: the rapturous accounts of "the little Princesses", Elizabeth and Margaret Rose, were a priceless antidote to the Abdication; pictures of Elizabeth in ATS uniform doing her bit with a spanner helped the war effort; her wedding was an excuse for the first national celebration after the war, temporarily dispelling the gloom of economic crisis and continuing rationing.

But it also has a more mystical aspect. The Coronation had a real effect in reinforcing national identity, the idea of a New Elizabethan Age marking a genuine sense of an optimistic new beginning. 25 years later the Silver Jubilee – in the middle of another period of national doom and gloom – showed a remarkable persistence of faith in the monarchy; while even last year, with most of the magic gone, the appearance of the Queen and her mother on the palace balcony was still the symbolic climax of the VE-Day anniversary. Pimlott shows how both Harold Wil-



Smiling in the face of national disaster: The Queen and Jürgen Klinsmann at Wembley, June 1996

son and Ian Smith sought to use the Crown for opposite purposes at the time of Rhodesian UDI; how the Thatcher Government exploited Prince Andrew's participation as a helicopter pilot to fuel patriotic enthusiasm for the Falklands war; and how skilfully – at least in the early years of the reign – different images of the Queen were projected to appeal to different countries of the Commonwealth. He meticulously marks the steps by which the Palace, in the person of successive private secretaries and press secretaries – first came to terms with and then tried

unsuccessfully – to control the ever-growing public appetite for information about the royal family. He is gently satirical about some of the early manifestations of royal gush; but coming at the subject from a primarily political perspective, he has a keen sense of the strategic calculations that lay behind even the most sickly fantasy-mongering – until, that is, it all went horribly wrong.

Contrary to expectations, he has gained access to some excellent sources. He has naturally made good use of the public

records, the Royal Collection (up to 1952) and the papers of politicians; he is particularly strong on the dealings of Labour Governments with the Palace on sensitive matters like the Civil List. But well as the familiar published diaries, he has found sharp insights in the unpublished diary of Jock Colville, who between his two spells as Churchill's private secretary served Princess Elizabeth in the same capacity.

The Avon papers have yielded a regular correspondence between the Queen and Sir Anthony Eden, after his fall, commenting frankly on the performance of his successors. The Kennedy Archive in Washington has thrown up a chatty letter to JFK, mixing politics and family gossip; another letter from the Royal Collection to her racing manager Lord Porchester, all about Dr Nkrumah, has somehow slipped through the Palace net. He has also got hold of a correspondence with her dressmaker, Hardy Amies, full of tart reminders of the need for economy. None of this is sensational, but it gives the book more of the spice of the Queen's own words than previous biographies have managed.

Then there is interview material, a high proportion of which is openly attributed. Inevitably there is still a good deal of "a courtier commented", "a former lady of the bedchamber reveals", referenced in the notes as "confidential interview". But those who have spoken on the record include the former principal private secretary Lord Charteris, the former assistant private secretary Sir Edward Ford and – most remarkably Princess Margaret. Such high-level sources lend this book an unprecedented authority.

Pimlott is undeniably weaker on the human side. His account of the Queen's marriage is surprisingly thin. Prince Philip's rumoured infidelities do not interest him; this is a matter on which he has no serious evidence, so as a good historian he leaves it alone. More questionably, since the collapse of her children's marriages is a matter of public concern, he offers very little discussion of the Queen's alleged shortcomings as a mother. The defence that "there are many women today who find it necessary to delegate responsibility for their children because of employment that is less demanding than being a Monarch" may be true; but it is still a hit of a cop-out.

Altogether the book falls off towards the end. Perhaps recent events – the tawdry shenanigans of Charles and Diana and Fergie are just too familiar, and Pimlott has nothing new to say about them. There is a sense of relief in the final chapter when he gets back on his own ground with a brief summary of the case for republicanism. For a moment he seems to have some sympathy with the abolitionist argument that the survival of the monarchy corrupts the entire body politic, making us all "subjects" instead of "citizens" and rendering impossible the development of a mature democracy.

All the traditional arguments put forward since 1953 to justify the monarchy – the unity of the Empire, the preservation of the social pyramid, the model family – have crumbled. But then he turns the argument on its head: the "golden thread" of the monarchy is so inextricably woven through the national fabric that it cannot be unstitched without intolerable damage. The monarchy is not a barrier to social progress, but in fractured post-Thatcherite Britain a source of social cohesion, even a check on the excesses of the loony Right. His final paragraph would not have disgraced Crawfie himself. If Pimlott was not a royalist when he started, writing this book appears to have made him one.

## Module behaviour

How does the mind work? **Colin Tudge** explains

**The Pre-History of the Mind** by Steven Mithen, Thames & Hudson, £16.95

**The Pre-History of Sex** by Tim Taylor, Fourth Estate, £18.99

Two books on how human beings came to be the way we are, by two clever, articulate archaeologists. But while one (Mithen) has gone with the flow of modern evolutionary ideas, brought them together, and generated novel and valuable insights, the other (Taylor) has fought a politically correct but misguided rear-guard action against modernity.

Mithen points out that the explanations of how the mind works have taken two contrasting forms. The influential Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget believed that the mind operates as an all-purpose computer: a general intelligence. Even language is a manifestation of a general ability to process information. But other thinkers argue that the mind is built from a series of discrete "modules" or "domains", and is designed expressly to deal with specific problems. Thus Noam Chomsky suggested that children's ability to pick up language cannot be explained as a general exercise in problem-solving. Human language depends for its versatility and efficiency on its underlying syntax, which is broadly similar from culture to culture although the details differ. Children acquire the ability to apply syntax accurately even though the clues they gain from listening to people around them do not provide nearly enough data from which a general problem-solver could infer the syntactical principles. We must conclude, said Chomsky, that children are born with an

innate and discrete ability to handle words in an orderly fashion: a language module.

Others have extended

Chomsky's idea and suggested that the human mind is equipped with a range of such modules, each geared to a different task: indeed, Leda Cosmides and John Tooby have recently been comparing the mind to a Swiss army knife – a collection of problem-solving tools, each operating more or less autonomously. Cosmides and Tooby argue that each of these mental tools – modules – has been shaped by natural selection over the past few million years to solve the specific day-to-day survival problems of early humans. Thus our ancestors evolved a face recognition module, a tool-use module, a social exchange module, a sexual selection module, and so on.

In practice, neither a Piaget-style general computer nor the Chomsky-Cosmides module model seems able to explain everything the mind can do, but Mithen shows how the two can do so together. In an adroit shift of metaphor he compares the structure of the mind to the architecture of a cathedral. The chapels around the *periphery*, each dedicated to a different purpose, are like the modules while the central nave approximates to general intelligence.

Now, says Mithen, whereas in the earliest Romanesque churches the chapels and the nave are sequestered behind thick walls with narrow openings, in late Gothic cathedrals the walls are reduced to

ideal woman seems to have varied enormously from age to age, from melon-bellied terracotta stone-age "Venus" to modern Twiggy.

How should we explain such variations? Sociologists traditionally did not try: important human behaviour is rooted in culture, they said, and *vive la difference*. But modern evolutionary psychologists seek uniting features, with origins lying deep in biological history. Thus Devendra Singh of the University of Texas has shown that although stone-age Venus and modern pin-ups may differ in bulk by 50 per cent or more they all have precisely the same ratio of measurements of waist to hips: 0.7. Singh then shows that women with a 0.7 waist-hip ratio suffer fewest obstetric setbacks, and live longest.

This is comparable ideas from evolutionary psychology are precisely what Taylor needs to bind his observations into a tight thesis of human sexuality, just as Mithen has done for the mind. But what does Taylor do with such insights? He derides them, suggesting that the universal preference for a waist-hip ratio of 0.7 has been prompted by the centrefolds of *Playboy*.

Singh's work may well be open to criticism but Taylor's reason for rejecting it is silly. Yet it is politically correct (and specifically in the manner of Stephen Jay Gould) to reject all explanations of human behaviour that are biological rather than sociological for (so Gould would have us believe) the biological explanations lead us into "genetic determinism" and the rejection of free will. But they don't or at least, only in knuckle brains. Taylor has been led astray. Gould has a lot to answer for.

The innocence of Rinka seems to be a major theme of this exhaustive and bleakly funny re-investigation of the Jeremy Thorpe affair. Yet the authors admit that Rinka, the Great Dane belonging to the Liberal leader's spurned lover Norman Scott, was "highly excited" that foggy night on Porlock Hill, "jumping" at the terrified gunman Andrew Newton, who "thought he was being attacked by a man-eating donkey".

Many people had been in Newton's shoes, at a late hour on a lonely moor not a million miles from the old stamping ground of the Hound of the Baskervilles, and had they happened to have a pistol handy, might have found themselves tempted to do Newton did, and open fire before the fangs came any closer.

Simon Freeman and Barrie Penrose concede that many people might have been tempted to shoot Norman Scott as well. He was an exasperating tar-baby of a man who was unable to make his way in life except by battering oo to people who felt sorry for him, and who was equally unable to repay those people except with tantrums and petty acts of spite.

Freeman and Penrose are convinced that Newton was sent to murder Scott, not simply to frighten him, and only failed because the ageing Mauser jammed after firing the one round that killed Rinka, so the poor animal indirectly saved her master's life. But Newton, a self-confessed liar and fantasist, kept

changing his story when caught, and the jury at Jeremy Thorpe's trial did not find him a reliable witness.

As to who hired Newton, it was a friend of Thorpe's called David Holmes. The contract fee of £10,000 was major spuds for a mere frightening job. Thorpe obtained it, by written requests over his own signature, from the millionaire philanthropist Jack Hayward in the Bahamas, claiming it was to cover Liberal Party election expenses. Police traced it by bank paperwork, through a secret Party account in Jersey, on to Holmes, and on to Newton. They also recovered Thorpe's letters to Hayward. But as soon as you mention offshore bank accounts to a jury, they get confused and stop listening.

Holmes, as Thorpe's co-defendant along with the two Welsh businessmen who recommended Newton for the job, did not testify. The only witness who said Thorpe had been planning for years to kill Scott was Peter Bessell, sometime Liberal MP for Bodmin. But Bessell was another self-confessed liar, with a string of failed businesses and duped creditors behind him. Furthermore his hair was dyed an unconvincing shade of orange. So his story went for nothing.

Scott himself was more than pleased to tell the court, as he told everyone he met, about his homosexual affair with Thorpe. A guilt-ridden cradle Catholic, he stated that homosexuality was an incurable dis-

ease with which Thorpe had infected him back in 1961, and that Thorpe should therefore have looked after him for the rest of his life. Bent on revenge ever since Thorpe dumped him, he had continually pestered the man for cash while threatening to go public. Freeman and Penrose insist that this was not calculated blackmail, it was just Norman being Norman. But the jury may have felt less confident on the matter. Scott was yet another dodgy witness.

As political scandal, *Rinkgate* is old news. But as a story of people's failure to recognise and tackle their own shortcomings – Thorpe's hypocrisy, Scott's self-pity – it is quite instructive.

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# Guns and poses

Roy Foster admires the style of an Irish political mistress

**Hazel: A Life of Lady Lavery 1880-1935** by Sinead McCole, Lilliput, £25  
**Michael Collins: A Life** by James Mackay, Mainstream, £17.50

The "art of biography" has been replaced by the selling of Lives, and these two books provide an instructive contrast. Michael Collins arrives landed with hype, "under strict embargo", "remarkable...hitherto unpublished material", "an important bearing on the solution of the present [Northern Irish] dilemma". In fact it says nothing substantially new, and says much of that inaccurately. The first biography of Hazel Lavery arrives unheated, but turns out to be new in every way, containing material which radically changes perceptions of several important figures from the early 20th century - including, as it happens, Michael Collins.

Hazel Lavery effortlessly attracted publicity all her life. Yet previous attempts at biography were foiled by the apparent disappearance of papers, recovered by Sinead McCole, many of surpassing political interest. One of the great beauties of the early 20th century, she stares out of society portraits and early Beaton photographs swathed, turbaned, jewelled: most famously, as the personification of Ireland on the bank notes of the new state in the 1920s. Beaton's description captures it: "that goathorn Lumi mask...the ravishingly chiselled, rabbit nose, ruby lips close in a pout, wistful hare eyes, pink lids..."

The mystique was facilitated by being married to an influential painter, John Lavery, who possessed a good eye for a "public" subject but also remained fascinated by his much younger wife and painted her obsessively until (and on) her death-bed. It also owed much to her own genius for reinvention. Born into the self-made Chicago bourgeoisie, her Irish connections were distant. It is a Jamesian story: the "original" American girl who falls in love with Europe and acts as a catalyst for upheavals which end in ultimate disillusionment. But her importance in Irish history is established by this book.

Her salon, her love affairs, her political nationalism have long made up one kind of myth behind the achievement of Irish nationalism. Because this hinted at liaisons with heroic figures like the IRA guerrilla supreme Michael Collins, a countering myth swiftly grew up: Hazel Lavery as a self-deceiving fantasist, who invented love affairs with glamorous revolutionaries as soon as they were safely dead. Faced with scraps of documentary evidence, the more pious authorities were unashamed: Hazel had fabricated letters to herself, or interpolated passionate passages into them. But this, along with a good deal else, is firmly

contradicted in McCole's unassuming but decisive treatment of her life.

In fact she never really lived in Ireland: her London saloon at Cromwell Road was the centre of her life. As a hostess she used lack of money to stylish advantage. She could also, like Diana Cooper, cash in her fortunate face by advertising Pond's Cold Cream or driving a free Armstrong Siddeley. Intelligent as well as witty, she wanted more: she found it in Ireland. After the 1916 Rising, as the political situation radicalised, she and her husband supported the radical nationalist side. Lavery, though knighted for his services as an artist and very much part of the establishment, was by origin a Belfast Catholic; Hazel rediscovered her Irish roots. During the early weeks of the Anglo-Irish Treaty negotiations in 1921, Collins met Winston Churchill off-duty at Cromwell Road, while Lavery painted portraits of most of the Treaty delegates for his "Irish Collection", a project suggested by Hazel. She threw her weight behind the Treaty: an adroit social fixer, after independence she longed to run Ireland from the Viceregal Lodge. Still, her private relationships remained obscure.

But she kept her letters, enabling McCole to recount matter-of-factly several affairs with leading political figures. Hazel's relationship with Collins may not have been fully consummated - she seems to have been keener on admiration than sex - but it is clear from the notes and poems to "Dearest Hazel" that he was deeply smitten: they were almost inseparable just before his death in 1922, and her passionate mourning for him now looks like reality, not self-deception. Just as telling is the solicitude with which his old comrades (and his sister) treated her afterwards sending her the mementoes he kept of her and assuring her of his love.

There are further surprises, including a garrulous *americana amorem* with Ramsay MacDonald, unrecorded by his biographers. But the real revelation in this book is her subsequent affair with Kevin O'Higgins, the strong man of the Free State government and national leader-in-waiting, who was also gunned down by Republican opponents. His hotted letters are at odds with his puritanical image (and with the letters he simultaneously wrote to his wife); there is no question that this was a grand obsession. Much as with Parnell's secret letters to Mrs O'Shea 40 years before, they show a longing to be "free" and a private reaction against politics which would have appalled his associates.

This would also have appalled posterity in Ireland - at least until quite recently. Not the least important thing about this book is the extra dimension it adds to national heroes - and the fact that Irish public opinion has been able to take this in its stride. It also gives a memorable portrait of Hazel herself. McCole is judiciously unafraid to show that her subject could be at times foolish, bigoted, self-obsessed and tedious, as well as brave, imaginative and in the end independent. Her political involvements, and the violent deaths of so many close to her, accentuated a certain seriousness. She knew her face was her fortune: a merciless small boy noted that when she cried, her tears made "tunnels" down the make-up on those spectral cheeks. But she mockingly described her own appearance during her last illness as "the imaginary child" of Gandhi and Margaret Asquith. As for Lavery, he painted her throughout, finally producing a macabre study of her coffin.

Given this high-voltage material, McCole's understated but sympathetic approach is exactly judged. Mackay is correspondingly unfortunate: heroic biography leaves little room for additions to Tim Pat Coogan's racy but widely-researched treatment of Collins six years ago. Mackay adds some details about his early employment in the Post Office and that is about it. The author's lack of familiarity with Irish conditions is constantly betrayed (the Collins family inhabited a "tiny farm 90 acres in extent"). His effusions are suggestive of a previous work, *William Wallace: Brave Heart*. "The true Celtic temperament" counts for much; the hero "moves with the grace of a ballet dancer" and his "generous mouth tightened dourly" at the sight of Dublin Castle. Historical background is crude and inaccurate; religion has nothing to do with the "twisted logic" of Ulster Unionism, the complex contingencies of the shift to armed resistance after 1916 are blithely ignored, staggering speculations are presented (if Collins had lived partition would probably "have been nipped in the bud", by the simple expedient of "leading a strong army into the North"). One unsubstantiated anecdote follows another in a style that alternates genteel gush with flaccid cliché ("Quite frankly, Cathal [Brugha] was jealous as hell"). The relationship with Hazel Lavery is dismissed in two glancing references. Collins was much more interesting, and much more complicated than this; so was she; so, for all the alternative reality of publicity writers, is history.



Hazel Lavery: "Ravishingly chiselled, rabbit nosed and wistful hare eyes", as Flora at a ball in 1914

## Liars on a grand scale

Philip Hoare investigates the tricky business of film biography

**The Real Life of Laurence Olivier** by Roger Lewis, Century, £17.99

**Rosebud: The Story of Orson Welles** by David Thomson, Little, Brown, £20

Roger Lewis dislikes the restrictions of biography, and scorns the petty conventions of chronology. But such conventions exist for a reason: they work and Lewis's account jumps about like a cricket on a hot plate; to misquote Dickens, it plays sad havoc with the tenses.

And yet - Lewis's empathy is admirable and his analyses of Olivier's oeuvre sincere. His headlong plunge into the world Olivier creates around himself in *Wuthering Heights* brings the performance to life; Olivier's Heathcliff "is not an ignorant and rude lot, he's a gypsy baron - indeterminate and with night hanging in his eyes", less felicitous are descriptions of Geraldine Fitzgerald's "washed-out, shagged-to-death look", or *Gone With the Wind* as "the most

cumbersome and crappy film ever made". All good fun, but one longs for something less high-octane; just as one might have done in Larry's company. And like Lord Olivier, Lewis's own prejudices get the worse of him: discussing the intimate relationship between Olivier and Noel Coward, Lewis announces: "Homosexuality is a mockery of nature...a conspiracy...as bad as anti-Semitism."

David Thomson is also given to addressing his readers: "Orson Welles lied a lot you will see. You may even decide that he lied all the time as the only available way of keeping patience with life." Although as much a biographical dissembler as Lewis, Thomson allows the facts to speak for themselves in a vital account of Welles's rise and fall. Like his subject,

Thomson becomes a showman, taking on Orson's mythomaniacal timbre: Welles does not eat a steak dinner, he *inhales* it. Having made his point about Welles's self-fantasy, are we then to place our trust in his champion? Another biographer's quandary. The reader - perhaps unreasonably - wants the truth, and the author knows it, worrying that "unlikelihood casts a shadow on your pleasure". The problem of how to portray a character who spent his life portraying other characters is addressed by both Lewis and Thomson, and both employ subjectivity in its solution, with varying degrees of success.

The highpoints of Thomson's book are naturally those of Welles's life.

Welles's beginnings in theatre in Ire-

land and with his own company, Mercury, are vividly described; you can feel the man's energy. The *War of the Worlds* charade is a defining moment: Welles's sonorous interpretation deceiving a populous because of his authorial weight as a narrator in the *March of Time* newsmagazine. Welles's voice seems critical to his conception; that "superior fraudulence" which became as parodic as Olivier's. And as with Olivier, the lure of the movies was a dubious siren career call. In Welles's entry into Hollywood, Thomson sees a "Faustian bargain", yielding theatre credibility for illusory screen success.

"People had to work hard to resolve to dislike Welles; otherwise they were seduced." Sexually, these included Dolores del Rio, Rita Hay-

worth, Vivien Leigh, Marlene Dietrich and Judy Garland; and most of those within a ten-year span. With *Kane*, both Welles and Thomson prove the power of that attraction: the sheer anarchic drive (fuelled by Benzedrine and two bottles of spirits a day), evading Hollywood's "industrial grip" to produce his masterpiece.

Thomson is not loathe to compare *Kane* with Welles, and the "dreadful, ruined narcissism" which would overtake the actor-film-maker-showman. With *Kane*'s relative failure, Welles pursued the rest of his life at speed, "doing too much, yet not enough of it seemed worth the effort". Welles's weight became a caprice of disappointment: despite nearly great comebacks such as *Touch of Evil*, the promise remained unfulfilled.

## shelf life

Philip Kerr reviews his own back catalogue

### Subliminal Cuts (juvenilia)

I harboured literary ambitions from the moment I could read and started writing long before I had anything to say. Through my adolescence I turned out a series of awful poems and plays and, when I was 16, a dreadful novel called

*Subliminal Cuts*. It was about a man having a relationship with two women at the same time. I destroyed it a long time ago.

### The Berlin Noir Trilogy

I set myself an almost impossible task with my first novel, *March Violets*, which was to recreate the atmosphere of pre-war Berlin. I wanted to imagine what would have happened if Chandler, who spent his youth in Dulwich, had moved there, rather than to California. At the time research seemed to be the key to getting published, so I spent hours tramping around Berlin: the whole process took about three years. I felt sufficiently interested in my gumshoe (Bernie Gunther) to write another two novels, but I didn't want to get stuck with him forever, so I decided to quit and try something else.

### A Philosophical Investigation

I wrote this as an antidote to all the research I'd been doing - an imaginative novel that needed no location work at all. I wrote it from a woman's perspective which was fun to do, and I think I pulled it off. Certainly, women say that I got her character exactly right.

*Esau* When I was at school teachers were always telling us to "write about what you know" but I prefer to start from a position of complete ignorance. In this novel, there wasn't much opportunity to exercise my unbridled interest in sex because *Esau* is set on a snow-covered mountain in the Himalayas.

*A Five Year Plan* The title is taken from *The Third Man*. Tom Cruise bought the film rights before it was even written, which made some people accuse me of cynically disguising as novels. All I can say is that if it was that easy I'd have done it a long time ago. It took me 15 years to get published and seven of those were spent near the breadline.

## Sweet boys with insufferable parents

What happens to little stars when they grow up and stop twinkling? Peter Parker reports

**The Moving Picture Boy: An International Encyclopedia 1895-1995** by John Holmstrom, Michael Russell, £39.50

The title of John Holmstrom's handsome encyclopaedia is taken from a song composed and sung by Kenneth Casey, "the Vitagraph Boy": "Every time my face is flashed upon the screen," he warbled unblushing, "They say 'Oh, he's the sweetest thing we've ever seen'." The accompanying photo shows an extremely decadent-looking child, androgynous of feature, haughty of expression, somewhat reminiscent of Adore Loomis, the repulsive child star very satisfactorily stamped to death at the climax of John Schlesinger's film version of Nathaniel West's *The Day of the Locust*. Holmstrom has been unable to find a genuine model for Adore (played by Jackie Haley in the film), and his book is in some ways a corrective to the popular image of the child star as monster. This does not, however, restrain him from making some pleasingly astringent comments about the talents and behav-

iour of some of his subjects. Of Anatole "Bebe" Mary, an infant phenomenon of the early French cinema, he records that Pathé's Louis Feuillade "had about enough of 'Bebe', with his prima donna airs and his insufferable parets; but he couldn't possibly dump such a valuable commodity until he had found a successor whom the public preferred". "Bebe" was eventually replaced by René Poyen, but was immediately taken up by Gaumont and was still acting in his sixties.

Not all child actors were so fortunate, and much of the interest and poignancy of this book comes from learning what happened to these little stars when they reached maturity and stopped twinkling. While Serge Gravé was still playing schoolboys at 19 ("with some grace, but, here was a strong sense of knobbly knees") and Wesley Barry continued to teenagers into his mid-thirties, others grew up all too soon. Poyen's

career was over by the time he was 17; he ended up "director of a rubber factory in Paris". Some of these actors failed even to reach maturity: six-year-old Breezy Eason, Jr., "Universal's Littlest Cowboy", was crushed by a truck on one of his film director father's sets; Lawrence McKeen ("Baby Snookums") died of blood poisoning at the age of eight; and Norman "Chubby" Chaney, "resident fatso" of the "Our Gang" films, died aged 17 of a glandular disorder which had seen him tip the scales at a grotesque 300 lbs.

Not all child actors were doomed, however, and even those who failed to make it as adult actors often made use of their first-hand knowledge of the business, becoming directors, editors, cameramen and technicians. Some grow up more than others: Jackie Moran, 1937's "Lucky Finn" and Buster Crabbe's juvenile sidekick in the *Buck Rogers* space series, ended up writing scripts for Russ Meyer, Tommy Kirk, "the Disney boy actor" of the 1950s, came out as gay - not something calculated to delight the distinctly conservative Uncle Walt. These are the sort of quirky details that make Holmstrom's book so engrossing.

### Coopan, earned some \$4,000,000

during the 1920s, but was later obliged to sue his mother and step-father in order to recover what little remained after the legal fees had been deducted. Holmstrom writes that Coogan "left the world groggy with admiration," but he never falls into this trap himself. He judges these boys rigorously, not only on what the Germans call *Moppehaftigkeit*, but also on their acting skills. In some cases these were negligible, and Holmstrom says so. The book is beautifully produced, profusely illustrated, contains scrupulous filmographies and two indexes (of boy actors and film titles) in addition to the general one. A companion volume on moving picture girls is forthcoming, completing a project that will be invaluable for reference and make a fascinating contribution to our knowledge of the ways in which children have been viewed and treated in our century.



The book  
you  
meant to  
read

The Tenant of  
Wildfell Hall (1848)  
by Anne Brontë

Plot: The novel's narrator is Gilbert Markham, young farmer and decent chap. He falls in love with Helen Graham, the beautiful, mysterious tenant of Wildfell Hall. She has a son and is presumed to be a widow. The locals gossip about Helen's "friendship" with her landlord, Frederick Lawrence. Initially Gilbert is sceptical, but subsequently overhears an intimate exchange between Helen and her friend, loses his temper and thumps Lawrence.

Helen, afraid that Gilbert will push off, reveals all to him in a diary. Her dark secret is brought to light. When young she married Arthur Huntingdon, a drunkard and a rake. In standard Victorian fashion, Helen believed that the love of a good woman would reform him, but Huntingdon is beyond her redemption. She runs away to brother Lawrence who provides the tenancy of Wildfell Hall. After Gilbert learns the truth, Helen returns to her husband who dies of dissipation. She is now ripe for re-marriage. Gilbert joyfully complies.

Theme: Marriage is not what it cracked up to be. Helen's union with Huntingdon proves to be a legalised misery. Good behaviour cannot purify a depraved character. Helen's virtues prove less attractive to her husband than the brandy bottle.

Style: The galloping melodrama of the plot is curbed by a prose which owes more to *Mansfield Park* than *Wuthering Heights*. The mixture of Gilbert's staid narration and Helen's emotional diary is piquant.

Chief strengths: Brontë's straightforward honesty of purpose constantly surprises: "I maintain it is better to depict vice and vicious characters as they are than as they would wish to appear." (Preface). Helen's boredom and despair is counterbalanced by a sympathetic understanding of Huntingdon's self-destructive addiction.

Chief Weaknesses: The concluding tinkle of wedding bells is hard to accept, given the acidulous portrait of the nuptial condition.

What they thought of it then: Reviewers noted the book's still but deftly "mordant love for the coarse". There was disapproval of the "spleenetic bitter tone" and the "disgusting language". It was deemed "unsuitable for lady readers."

What we think of it now: Anne is emerging from her role as the anaemic Cinderella of the Brontë sisters. Her forthright approach is less sexy than her siblings, but it is also less insistently "romantic".

Responsible for: The forthcoming BBC adaptation which will suffer from the usual costume elephanthiasis and remodel Wildfell Hall as a cross between Castle Howard and the Escorial.

The book  
you  
listen to

Poets for Pleasure: John Donne (Hodder Headline, £7.99) is a quite excellent selection of Donne's love poems, sacred poetry and prose, with a useful short introduction. Luminously read by Vanessa and Corin Redgrave, by turns passionate, teasing, furious and philosophical.

The Nation's Favourite Poems (BBC, 2hrs, £7.99) is an exhilarating enough canter, although it's hard to come freshly to poems like "To Daffodils" and "To Autumn". And there is the odd annoying emphasis ("I will arise and go now..."). But a great way to relearn the hits you've forgotten.

Christina Hardiment

# That universal feeling

Bernard O'Donoghue celebrates the short lyric poem

**T**he major challenge facing the volume of short lyric poems has always been how to achieve with its small components the thematic weight of longer works.

Christopher Reid makes it clear from the outset in *Expanded Universes* (Faber, £6.99) that he is aware of this dilemma, and doesn't care. The Universes of his title come from Alexander Calder, in a wonderful passage which Reid uses as epigraph: "They weren't intended to move, although they were so light in construction that they might have swayed a little in the breeze... The circular forms... have some kind of cosmic or universal feeling." It is a perfect definition of the free-standing but finicky artefacts that the most successful small poems often are, while also claiming universality for them.

Reid's expanded universe often make such persuasive claims for largeness, in poems like "The Fly" which transcendentalise Donne's earthly, vulnerable creature: "A few inches above where the fly sees a gap of air... waits, but this has not yet been vouchsafed to the fly. The question is: will it ever be? This is typical of how Reid's lightness is a matter of

Reid's expanded universes are ours viewed through binoculars.

Though Brian Patten

comes from a very different socio-poetic milieu, he shares Reid's account of our frailty,

reinforced in *Armada* (Flamingo, £5.99) by the powerful opening sequence of poems about his mother's death which culminates in "Five Down," a wonderfully spare and bleak lament for the senses, recalling it

old English *The Seafarer*: "Her hands have abandoned the cloth. Her tongue has let go of taste. Patten's great gift is the clarity and force of his language. Here, more than in any previous book, that strength is put to the grave service of elegy, its plainness reinforced by apt literary allusion.

"Lockiebie," for example, is a reworking of Thomas's "Adestrop"; and the book's masterpiece is a magnificently wry reworking for the Liverpool poets of Dunham's "Lament for the Makaris," pondering the brackets that will enclose our birth – and death-dates:

"Timorous-sister, the brackets close in. They drop against the ends of names, Not orderly, but my old how.

Heart, Mitchell, McGough – watch it matches. The hint of danger in that last detail brilliantly merges the contents of heart and handbag, like a postmodern "Rape of the Lock". Like both Reid and Patten, ber concern is with the difficulty of giving a convincing exterior form to love which belongs to the "heart". So, behind the grave, measured control of language, Dooley holds in reserve a capacity for the chilling – macabre as in the volume's title.

Maura Dooley, like Patten, holds the attention unfailingly in *Kissing a Bone* (Bloodaxe, £6.99), but by very different means. Even in her longer poems (a few, such as "Home"), are very short, with a Menache-like intensity) every word demands consid-

eration; nothing has been written lightly. The death of her father dominates this book as Patten's mother shadows his. In the most haunting poems Dooley shows by linguistic intercutting how the humdrum consciousness is invaded by grief, as in "What Every Woman Should Carry".

A credit card. His face the last time,

my patience, my useless youth.

That empty sack, my heart. A box of

matches.

The brackets, any day now. Through his career Patten has performed the remarkable feat of increasing in clarity, force and depth at the same time. *Armada* is his best book yet.

Maura Dooley, like Patten, holds the attention unfailingly in *Kissing a Bone* (Bloodaxe, £6.99), but by very different means. Even in her longer poems (a few, such as "Home"), are very short, with a Menache-like intensity) every word demands consid-



Beyond the known world: medieval man breaks through into the modern world Photo: AKG

*Obscura* (Colophon Press, £10) "image" seems too abstract a term for the physical centrality of the camera and its products.

Robertson's extended poem tells the story, through fictional diaries and poems, of David Octavius Hill, the nineteenth-century Edinburgh art photographer. All the time references are to May, between 1858 and 1870, emphasising like a medieval love-poet the promise, often dashed, of spring, expressive of the tragedy of Hill's life.

By using the camera as an image of the imagination and the unreliable fragility of its products (like Antoniini's *Blowup*), Robertson branches out into wide-ranging philosophical areas, particularly light which works like time in Shakespeare's sonnets: "The light that made it now dismantles it." It is also a figure of memorable and quotable moments: "After long exposure /ghosts returned to their bodies."

It is an unqualified delight and makes, again, a strong case for the longer verse structure: another way of expanding the universe.

## Shouting out boldly from the back of the bus

Kate Clanchy prefers the raucous to the navel-gazing in a round-up of new collections

**T**he imagination of the poet, according to Shakespeare, gives "to airy nothing / a local habitation and a name" – to an idea or an emotion, in other words, a tangible place and an audible voice: a home.

It is this sense of home that makes Rita Ann Higgins's poetry in *Sunny Side Plastered* (Bloodaxe, £8.95) so refreshing. Higgins is blissfully sure of her voice. Like one of those extraordinary Irish women who will sit beside you on the bus, settle her shopping in her lap, fix you with one wild blue eye, and strike up an astoundingly colourful and confidential conversation, Higgins's poems simply launch into stories: "She wasn't always this bitter / I knew her when she sang in pubs"; autobiography – "My father just passed me / In his Fiat 127 / I was cycling my bicycle, hideous"; or fantasies – "I always / Have my hair done / So I can look good / In the bath / In case / Kim

Basinger /Calls round" – with complete confidence that we know her relatives, history, hometown, her whole, off-kilter frame of reference. Which, because her world is so confidently realised, we soon do.

Higgins' voices are so distinctive and real that a whole world of semi-rural, Irish poverty rises around the reader with the jolting acuity of an excellent documentary. Being drawn into Higgins's home is an hilarious, absorbing and thoroughly disturbing experience, and as such constitutes a political statement.

Paula Meehan explicitly takes on the idea of home in *Mysteries of the Home* (Bloodaxe, £7.95). Her vision is equally Irish but far more literary, crafted and careful of her voice. Like Higgins's, Meehan's exact eye and mastery of evocative detail is equally effective when turned on to the present ("My Love About His Business In The Barn"), or on the detritus of the past ("Two Buck Tim from Timbuktu").

Something, however, some-

thing crammed with moons,

talismans, spells, archaisms

and exclamation marks takes

over her delicate language

when she strays from this per-

sonal territory into the darker

and vaguer area of myth. The

individual, precisely realised

mother of "The Pattern"

becomes, in "The Ghost of

My Mother Comforts Me," an

abstract force promising:

"Because /I am your mother

I will protect you /As I

promised you in childhood

/You will walk freely on the

planet /My beloved daughter"; and in the process loses all her character, common sense and individual voice.

Pauline Stainer's poems are extremely airy, both intellectually and sensually. They deliberately eschew, by reason of their extreme cleverness, anything so parochial as a local habitation. To read her new collection, *The Wound-Dresser's Dream* (Bloodaxe, £6.95), you will need a working knowledge of Keats, Ruskin, Primo Levi, *The Green Children of Woolpit*, and Joseph Knecht; and be prepared to toss around their names and probable dreams like post-modern juggling balls. It's actually quite fun in Stainer's world, so full of crystals, ice, and endlessly deferred meaning: weirdly light and fantastical, like lying in a greenhouse. It's not ever cosy, though.

There is little point in looking for comfort in Stephen

Knight's new collection *Dream City Cinema* (Bloodaxe, £6.95). Life, home and meaning just keep rushing past Knight. In between, people endlessly, poignantly miss things – their mothers, their grandmothers' death, their wife's surprise party – and are nibbled inexorably to dust by some superbly evoked hugs. Even the mermaid that age-old representative of femininity or mystery, is locked in Knight's competition-winning poem, "In A Tank", and may only be seen through a glass, darkly. It makes for grim, if compelling, reading.

I'd advise Knight to move to the country, where poets have so often found meaning in daffodils and so forth – but Matthew Francis's first collection *City of Clocks* (OUP, £6.99). As Hill reminds us in his award-winning title poem, we are doomed to be separate. Even if "we hold hands / Our pulses chaf against one another, like teeth: gaug-

ing the distance we're apart." Alienation is esse, to Hill's persona, allowing him to observe with a cool, sharp, journalistic eye and taut turn of phrase, first the weird juxtapositions of modern Japan, where Mister Fatboy holds court in Hiroshima, then the daily grotesqueries of London life. Through all this, we gain curiously little sense of a person, or a voice. Hill remains, as he says, "stopped in mid-step /Watching where the action is".

That couplet would do for Francis and Knight too: they are not concerned with creating a local habitation and a name" but with recreating the experience of nothingness. For all of them it is an authentically realised and no doubt profoundly felt position: but for myself, I prefer Rita Ann Higgins' voice, however crazed and unrefined, shouting out boldly from the back of the bus.

Kate Clanchy's *Snow* has just won the Forward Prize for Best First Collection.

## Poetic first-aid for a dislocated world

Ruth Padel applauds a classic anthology for the Nineties

**E**mergency Kit: Poems for Strange Times edited by Jo Shapcott and Matthew Sweeney, Faber, £9.99

of their work. Seriously playful, but not clever for the sake of it, these poems take what Frost called "a fresh look and fresh listen." They won't touch rhetoric. Like the Kit Kat ad, they go for the unsputtered, for irony, risk, humour, and diamond clarity. Revelation through concrete detail, oo seductive petals of abstraction.

Many use film-technique, tracking, cutting, frame-shift, or assume an in-your-face intimacy with readers. "Bear with me," murmurs Michael Donaghy. "You don't understand a word I'm saying, do you?" asks Carol Ann Duffy. Such an editor's principle is generosity (not always paramount in poetry circles) towards work superficially very different from their own – which, unforgivably, they leave out. They focus on a "territory of strangeness". I'd call it a dynamic of surprise, running through the work like dark wire. Some poets make it direct, others tap into it rarely, but its presence salts the rest

school) is obsolete. Or the only thing. Hence the title, *Emergency Kit*. As U.A. Fanthorpe confides, "Surviving is keeping your eyes open". When everything you see disorients you (the condition of surrealism), all you can do is articulate the strangeness. The title poem invokes surreal survival "among a laughing tribe", via a laughter-box "whose button I press / to outlast them." These poems are ways of seeing when seeing changes, something to clutch as we free-fall from "This strange century / With its slaughter of the innocents / Its flight to the moon".

A key poem is Edwin Morgan's "Video Box". Someone does a jigsaw representing the sea (reality's most shifting physical thing) on TV: our talismanic artefact, that illusion that seems-truth. When he's finished, the ocean turns real a moment. But only on screen. There are no separate sections. Subjects swim in and out like fish on a screen-saver.

Food, death. Animals, childhood. Sex, moonlanding. Anything that makes life worth thinking, as seen on TV. The poets' poems are separated, snuggling up to other people's so you see new linkings. Frost before Muldoon shows Muldoon's debt to Frost, but also something in Frost you hadn't twigged before. Juxtapositions are mischievous or tragic: Redgrave's "Visible Baby" ("heart like two squirrels, one scarlet, one purple") followed by Meehan's "Child Burial".

Bunting has the last word: Who says it's poetry anyhow? My ten year old... Can do it and rhyme... Nasty little words, nasty long words, it's unhealthy... I want to wash when I meet a poet... Go and find work.

Which is exactly what poets imagine unbewildered, economically-viable writers think of them. *Emergency Kit* offers articulations of strangeness to the bewildered, to help with a disorienting world.

## TWO HITS FROM MICHAEL DIBDIN

ff

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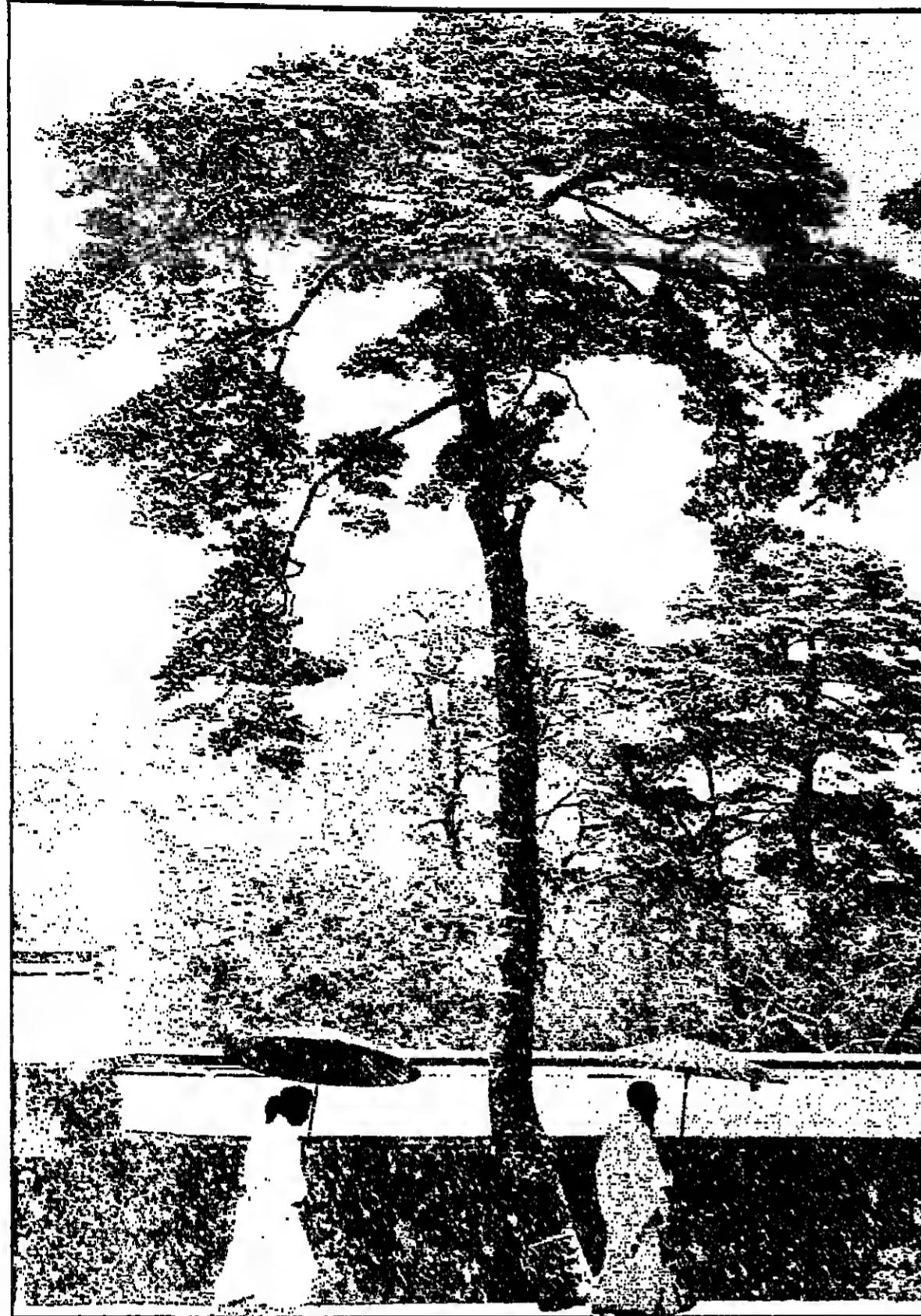
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The snow performs its secret ministry as two chilly Shinto priests, bearing flimsy paper parasols, wade across the inner courtyard of the Meiji Temple in Tokyo in 1952. Werner Bischof's magical picture is taken from 'So Many Worlds' by Dieter Bachmann and Daniel Schwartz (Thames & Hudson £40.00), a photographic record of the last half of the twentieth century. Harrowing pictures of children watching an air raid in London 1940, and a view over the ruins of Dresden in 1945 stand shoulder to shoulder with lighter subjects: two health ministry officials eyeing up the girls in Rio and a marvellous shot of James Joyce leaving a bookshop in Paris, 1938.

## Manning the barrios

Geoff Dyer says yo to a new writer from the Dominican Republic

*Drown* by Junot Diaz, Faber, £7.99

The epigraph, from Gustavo Pérez Firmat, provides a blueprint of the foundations on which these resounding, occasionally shaky, fictional structures are built: "The fact that I am writing to you in English already falsifies what I wanted to tell you. My subject: how to explain to you that I don't belong to English, though I belong to nowhere else."

Junot Diaz was born in the Dominican Republic and then moved to the States. His first book of loosely linked stories is about boys growing up in the *barrios* of Santo Domingo, and men struggling to make ends meet in New Jersey. On arrival in America one of Diaz's characters is "impressed with the transplanted Latinas, who had been transformed by good diets and beauty products unimagined back home"; likewise, few readers will be unimpressed by Diaz's version of transplanted - as opposed

to translated Spanish, flecked with and transformed by Hispanic *expresiones*.

A good proportion of the stories are narrated by the younger of two brothers whose father eventually emigrates to America, leaving them in a limbo of relief - no more beatings - loss and thwarted expectations. By adolescence, *los boys* - as Faber considered entitling the English edition before giving with the American, *Drowned* - are fending for themselves, stealing and dealing: "an ounce of weed for the big guy with the warts, some H for his cocked-up girl, the one with the bloody left eye. Everybody's buying for the holiday weekend. Each time I put a bug in a hand I say, Pow, right there, my man."

A character in the story "Boyfriend" is denied for his cheap "Rico Suave routine" and while instantly alluring, the absent father gets this story to

himself. By ending the book like this Diaz makes good another absence. The earlier pieces deployed themselves obliquely, seemed always to be approaching some definitive irresolution. Whereas in this story, which focuses unflinchingly on the figure who was not around when he was needed - and who, in "Fiesta 1980", did not like his son to look him "in the eye" while he was giving him a whipping - we move, finally, into the substantiality of thoroughly achieved narrative. This is it, the defining tale, of migration, struggle, exploitation and partial assimilation which, as it were, accounts for all the others. The story of the father's difficult transition to a larger, more challenging world is also, appropriately, a demonstration of how the writerly skill and promise displayed earlier in the book are already giving way to the sustained ambitions of the mature novelist-to-be.

In the future, when the Net Book Agreement is as quaint and remote as the Corn Laws, all books will be like *The Law of Love*. The Latin American writer Laura Esquivel hit pay-dirt in 1990 with *Like Water for Chocolate*, (now a major feature film) and is taking no chances with this latest venture. *The Law of Love* is not so much a novel as a multi-media marketing event. The heartwarming combination of science fiction and magic realism is further enlivened with great wedges of cod philosophy and erotic sex. And for that untapped sector of the reading public who find traditional novels rebarbatively bookish, there are pictures to look at and music to listen to. (A CD of the book's "soundtrack" is tucked into the dustjacket.)

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To be fair, Azucena has had a tough old time of it, pursuing her "twin soul" Rodriguez from 23rd century Mexico City to the ancient empire of Montezuma. Her picaresque passage through time and space is so dizzyingly complicated that Esquivel thoughtfully provides regular updates. "She couldn't take any more," we are told, at an especially bewildering juncture. "She had received too many blows in too short a time. She had lost her twin soul, had been on the verge of being murdered [by a power-crazed politician posing as the reincarnated Mother Teresa], had been forced to undergo a soul transplant, had discovered the murder of a close friend, had witnessed her beloved body occupied by an assassin, and finally, had found Rodriguez in a place that was for all practical purposes out of reach."

What is a girl to do? Fortunately, Azucena's Guardian Angel, Acacriente is on hand with gobs of New Age wisdom. "Hated" he points out, "is forever hunting down a refuge, poking its nose where it shouldn't, taking over sites reserved for others, invariably forcing out love. And Nature, which unlike the Gods, insists upon order, to the point of neurosis, you might say, feels the need to get into the act."

## Paperbacks

By Christopher Hirst and Emma Hagestadt

**The Irish Male at Home and Abroad** by Joseph O'Connor (Minerva, £6.99) According to Joseph O'Connor Irish males are "well-versed", non-communicative, drunken "welt". Nothing new here, and not much new to be found in this collection of journalism swiped from O'Connor's regular column in Ireland's *Sunday Tribune* along with articles from the pages of *Cosmo* and *Elle*. Thoughts on flavoured condoms ("a reusable alternative to chewing gum"), a trip to Nice (not "nice"), and the post-coital delights of curvy chips are served up alongside more serious reflections on "New Man" and the state of Lord

Archer's bathrooms - nice fittings, no bog rolls.

**Lifting the Taboo**, Women, Death and Dying by Sally Cline (Abacus, £7.99)

"There is no assurance that you will live to read the whole of this book." Not a comforting opening thought, and not a comforting book. Sally Cline's exploration of the sexual politics of death throws up some interesting ideas about women's relationship with the Grim Reaper. More likely to meet the end with a sense of commitments unfulfilled, women worry as much about being buried alive, as who will cook their hobbie's dinner after they've gone.

Useful advice on dying at home, and insights from female undertakers you'll wish you'd rather not read.

**G, a Novel** by John Berger (Bloomsbury, £6.99)

Winner of the 1972 Booker Prize, John Berger's once-trendy novel is a lot more

entertaining than some of his more recent ones. Set against an operatic background of *risorgimento* Italy and country-house England, it tells the story of G, the illegitimate son of a candied-fruit merchant and his early introduction to the sins of the flesh. Seemingly profound pronouncements on sex, love and death nestle around Berger's sensuous set pieces like the

word-perfect, fictional take

wrappers around a Baci chocolate. Turn of the century melodrama for Seventies hipsters.

**Morality Play** by Barry Unsworth (Penguin, £5.99)

Set in the depths of plague-ridden Yorkshire, Unsworth's medieval whodunit tells the story of Nicholas Barber, a lustful young cleric who abandons his calling to join a group of travelling players and once more smells the "budding hawthorn". A decision he never regrets, especially after he and the players help solve a murder and save a woman's life. With its cast of slatternly wenches and snooping monks, this is about as entertaining as your average Father Cadwael mystery.

**Primary Colors** by Anonymous (Vintage, £6.99)

It doesn't take long to realise why this foul-mouthed, but probably

word-perfect, fictional take on the Clintons and their entourage rocketed to the top of the bestsellers. On page 16, we are given a character analysis of the central figure: "Jack Stanton could be a great man, if he wasn't such a faithless, thoughtless, disorganized, undisciplined shit." And that's his wife talking. An acid comedy of modern political manners, which will still be read when the Clinton administration is a distant memory.

**The Habsburgs** by Andrew Wheatcroft (Penguin, £8.99)

A thrilling panoramic history - though rather old-fashioned in being more concerned with personality and "the mystical power of lineage" than the cold facts of economy. Wheatcroft unspools his vivid diorama of Europe's greatest dynasty from early luminaries such as Frederick the Fat (he died from a surfeit of

melons) through the lonely, belligerent Philip II of Spain and ill-fated Maximilian of Mexico, to the last remnants of the line, who lead "respectable, boring lives", hoping to be called back to rule.

**The Periodic Kingdom** by Peter Atkins (Phoenix, £5.99)

This surprisingly readable account of the building blocks of the universe utilises the metaphor of a travel guide. With the help of Atkins' lively sales patter, the "glittering, lustrous" desert of metals becomes a tempting destination. The names are particularly interesting: Atkins notes that "bromine" and "argon" derive from Greek words for "stench" and "lazy". He points out that helium, which makes up 25 per cent of the universe, was only found in 1868 and then on the sun. Also, it's not profitable to go prospecting

for francium - only 17 atoms of it exist on earth.

**The Race Gallery** by Marek Kohn (Vintage, £7.99)

Boasting a collection of 25,000 skeletons, a Race Gallery actually exists in Vienna's Natural History Museum. Kohn uses this poignant display of human differences as a starting point for an exploration of our muddled thinking on the peculiarly sensitive issue of race. While he effectively scuppers the views of modern hereditarians - in particular, *The Bell Curve* - for their mangling of recent genetic findings, he insists that race can no longer remain a no-go area for mainstream science. In reaching this radical conclusion, he has produced a vital work of scientific commentary.

**On Being Jewish** by Julia Neuberger (Mandarin, £6.99) This book's sole

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# Patchwork tales from the New World

E. Annie Proulx's characters perform like figures in a set-dance. **Clare Boylan** is intrigued but not drawn in

**Accordion Crimes** by E. Annie Proulx, Fourth Estate, £14.99

**C**yril Connolly once said that the American language was in a state of flux based on the survival of the unfittest. In her new novel E. Annie Proulx has made a savage comic poetry out of that bastard tongue, following the fortunes of the unfittest, from their arrival to their endurance or otherwise in the New World. Foul-mouthed, bawdy and heroic, her immigrants don't so much survive as get mashed into the great hamburger.

The characters are linked by a little green accordion, made by a poor Sicilian farmer. He dreams of new life in La Merica, "fresh and unused" of money hanging in the future like pearls hidden in high leaves." Instead he arrives in a New Orleans which Proulx paints as a fly-crawling, mosquito-ridden vision of hell: "A red moon crawled out of the east...a fetid stink of cesspools and burning sugar." Shunned, abused, conned and finally murdered by a racist mob, his instrument finds its way into the hands of a succession of immigrants for whom music is their only eloquence.

This is not so much a novel as an ingenious patchwork quilt, showing the American continent as the remnants of older, more ordered civilisations. From a distance it looks, as American novelist John O'Hara described it, "a country that has leaped by a barbarism to decadence without

touching civilization." Proulx makes you look closely to see that the patchwork society is made up from jewel-bright scraps salvaged from closest-knit and highly individualistic ethnic groups and shows that the butchered language and low-level culture come from a need to adapt too quickly. Reviled by racists, the immigrants mask their identity and are in turn shunned by their own children who come to detect their alienating origins.

The novelist turns herself into a telescope, showing the immigrants first as miniaturised masses and then as memorable individuals. "Silvano was repulsed by the maul on the wharf. It was as though some great spatula had scraped through Italy and deposited this crust of humans on the edge of the oily harbour." Magnified, the various mauls reveal a splendid range of eccentrics, from Mrs Malefoot, who kept "a Hitlerian clean house", to old Geri Beutle who tried to revive her German husband's lust by presenting her bare rump across a potato barrel while singing "The Best Things in Life Are Free", to the Frenchman who got into trouble for calling a man "un bouge du chien" and hitting him a *h*.

There are few love stories and fewer happy endings. Relationships are contingent, and birth and death accidents, and often violent. Strange and wonderful fates befall

Proulx's characters. One man cuts off his own head with an electric saw. A bride dies by inhaling a piece of shrimp at her wedding. She mixes fact with fiction, insinuating that half of history is composed of legend and she teases the reader by sending up her own tall tales. Wasn't it Rawley Sharp, she asks, who fell into the hot spring at Yellowstone Park, "and despite eyes parboiled blind and the knowledge of impending death, clambered out - leaving the skin of his hands like red gloves on the stony ledge?" After which she adds, "You bet."

Magic realism is stirred up with stranger-than-fiction facts. There is Mrs Blush Leleur, the French *maieuse* who, as a child, saw her father try to set fire to her mother. "The child directed a savage thought at her father, that he become small and weak. That night her father began to shrink. The process was agonizingly slow, but in ten years he was the height of a child, withered and tiny, his arms like hollow sticks, and when he finally died he was no larger than a loaf of bread." In ten years he was the height of a child, withered and tiny, his arms like hollow sticks, and when he finally died he was no larger than a loaf of bread. In ten years he was the height of a child, withered and tiny, his arms like hollow sticks, and when he finally died he was no larger than a loaf of bread. In ten years he was the height of a child, withered and tiny, his arms like hollow sticks, and when he finally died he was no larger than a loaf of bread.

Page by page this book is a stunner but it lacks a centre and makes you hanker after poor, lugubrious, gentle Quoyle in *The Shipping News*, whose misfortunes were pursued at sufficient length for him to ponder, it may be that sometimes love occurs without pain or misery."

## Soap opera with cd attached

**E. Jane Dickson** deplores a multi-media marketing event

**The Law of Love** by Laura Esquivel, Chatto, £15.99

In the future, when the Net Book Agreement is as quaint and remote as the Corn Laws, all books will be like *The Law of Love*. The Latin American writer Laura Esquivel hit pay-dirt in 1990 with *Like Water for Chocolate*, (now a major feature film) and is taking no chances with this latest venture. *The Law of Love* is not so much a novel as a multi-media marketing event. The heartwarming combination of science fiction and magic realism is further enlivened with great wedges of cod philosophy and erotic sex. And for that untrained sector of the reading public who find traditional novels rebarbatively bookish, there are pictures to look at and music to listen to. (A CD of the book's "soundtrack" is tucked into the dustjacket.)

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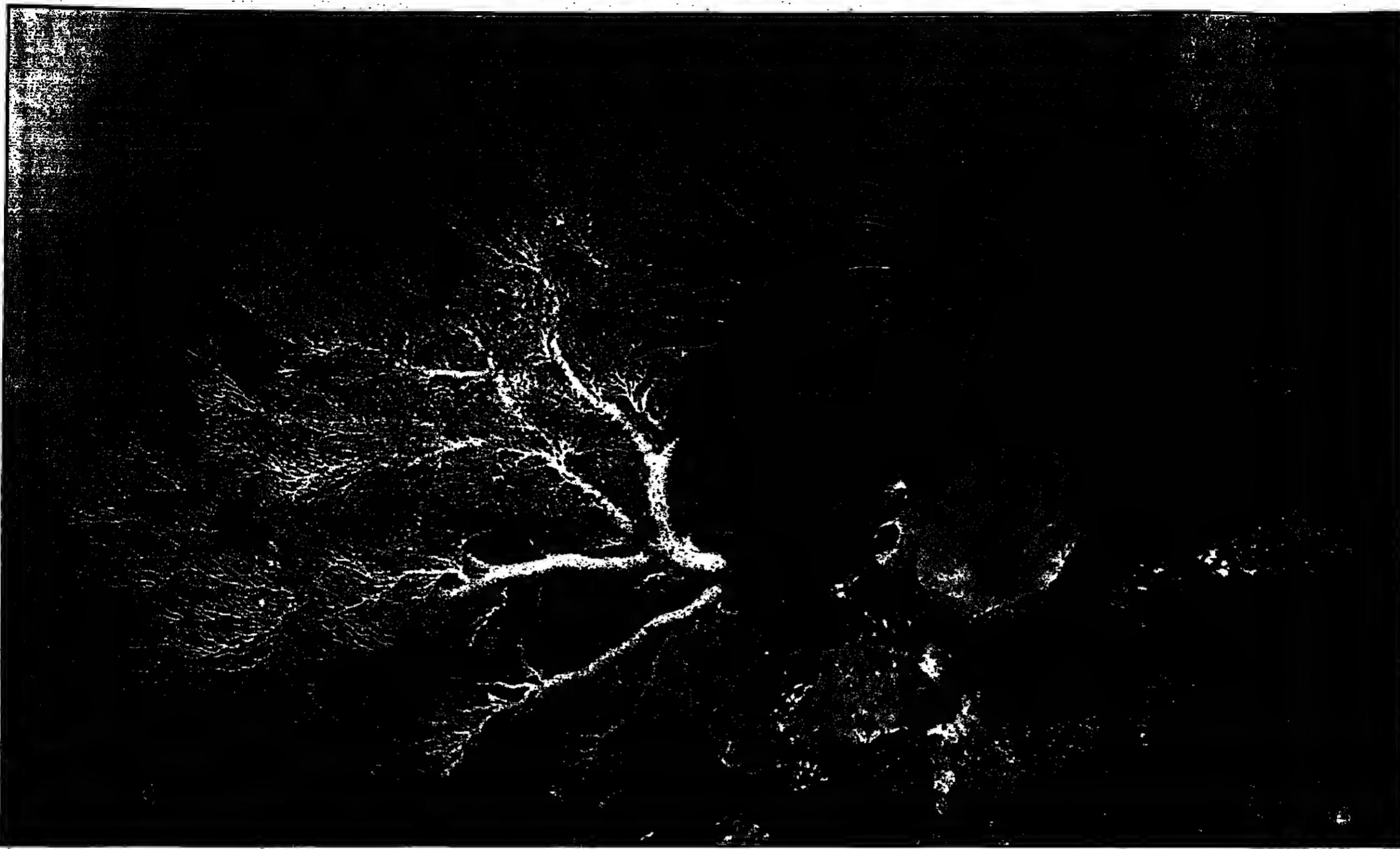
What is a girl to do? Fortunately, Azucena's Guardian Angel, Acacriente is on hand with gobs of New Age wisdom.

And so it goes on, page after page of incontinent and impenetrable claptrap. You are almost grateful for the storyboard cartoons by "Spain's premier graphic artist, Miguelanxo Prado" and the musical interludes (mushy recordings of Puccini and traditional dancenes). You can't help feeling, however, that Chatto and Windus have spoilt the ship for a *h* of tar. Why not follow through with a scratch 'n' sniff panel (Esquivel has a particularly joyless obsession with farts) or maybe a vacuum wrapped *enchilada* and ready mixed margaritas? But this is a council of perfection. Not so long ago, writers would put themselves and their readers through the slogs of conjuring sensory perception from the printed page. With this easy-to-use, book-style entertainment package, Esquivel has put an end to brain-engagement misery for ever.

Jeff in 70s

# travel & outdoors

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 Skiing ..... 14/15  
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 Country ..... 18



PHOTOGRAPH: PLANET EARTH

## A swim in the quiet storm

Harriet O'Brien dives through turbulence into the calm of Indonesia's coral reefs

It was like being in the rinse cycle of a washing machine. Forty feet under water, we swam round a bend of the great wall of coral and suddenly collided with a powerful whoosh of current. Under such circumstances there's little you can do but go with the flow. And observe how the locals are coping. The bigger fish had been able to fight their way through to stiffer, lower depths but the small fry, forced to abandon their snacking ground, were swept along with us, little dorsal fins quivering in the sea gale. It was gratifying to feel that we were all in this together. A few minutes later the tumbled gang - assorted angelfish, fusiliers, mini wrasses and scuba divers - had managed to twist free of the water force, no harm done.

In calmer quarters, we all resumed our varied activities: the fish got down to the serious business of nibbling on passing plankton and browsing through soft coral, the divers carried on gliding through the now serene seascape, hedonists on an aquatic sightseeing tour. There's no sense of "been there, done that" with scuba diving. It's always an adventure. You get a buzz from the fact that this is a potentially hazardous sport, from the sense of magic as you sink into a gloriously alien world of sublimely coloured plants and fish - and from the challenge of being caught in a strong current.

The adventure is perhaps all the greater in Indonesia, where the trail for coral and fish also

leads you to remote regions - volcanic landscapes of lush beauty, deserted tropical islands - and suddenly collided with a powerful whoosh of current. Under such circumstances there's little you can do but go with the flow. And observe how the locals are coping. The bigger fish had been able to fight their way through to stiffer, lower depths but the small fry, forced to abandon their snacking ground, were swept along with us, little dorsal fins quivering in the sea gale. It was gratifying to feel that we were all in this together. A few minutes later the tumbled gang - assorted angelfish, fusiliers, mini wrasses and scuba divers - had managed to twist free of the water force, no harm done.

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### Sulawesi with a scuba tank

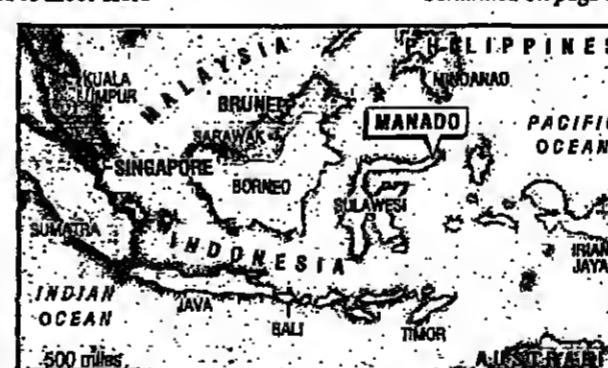
**How to get there:** Although Manado has an International airport, there are no direct flights from the UK. The most convenient route is via Jakarta or Bali. Harriet O'Brien flew to Jakarta with Qantas; the return trip cost £586 through Quest Worldwide (0181-547 3322). The Indonesian airline Garuda International (0171-486 3011) is currently offering an airpass around the archipelago for £243. This lasts 60 days and allows you a maximum number of seven flights. British visitors to Indonesia do not require visas.

**When to go:** Diving conditions are best in Sulawesi between April and October. The rainy season generally starts in November, when visibility becomes poor and access to the reefs around Bunaken difficult.

**Whom to trust:** Harriet O'Brien paid £40 for two dives per day organised by the Barracuda Diving Resort at Molas, Manado (tel 00 62 43154288, although communication is better by fax on 00 62 43164848). The price includes boat trips, lunch, hire of weight belt and professional guidance. Diving in Indonesia is in its infancy and not all operators offer qualified instruction or adequate equipment for hire. If possible take your own wet suit and regulator.

**Where to stay:** The Barracuda Diving Resort has comfortable accommodation: an all-in package for room (without air conditioning) and two dives per day costs from £50. Other hotels in Manado include the Hotel New Queen (00 62 431 65597) which charges from £10 a night.

**What to read:** *Underwater Indonesia* is published by Peripus, price £9.95



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Continued from page 9

A shark sighting is generally something to get excited about: you can't help but be impressed by the sheer power and size of these big fish. And unless you go shark baiting or appear to be a creature in distress (as you do swimming on the surface of the water), you are, apparently, unlikely to become lunch for these primitive bundles of aggression.

"I think it's all those bubbles. Sharks can't stand them" one of my fellow divers later commented. He and his wife were cheerful yuppies from the capital, Jakarta, and were diving on honeymoon. "Not what Indonesians normally do, but we've both become addicted." And they wanted photographs of the event. We duly obliged with an underwater camera, taking pictures of them, several group shots, and a few photographs of passing fish for good measure. Posing at a depth of 50ft is not something they cover at dive school, so we acquired new skills in lining up, keeping still and attempting to smile with a regulator-filled mouth.

Dipping into reference books to identify the

fish I'd seen, I thought that the coral reef was, inadvertently, a pretty kinky place for a honeymoon. The sex life of many of the fish is bizarre. The valiant little clown fish which live in the tentacles of sea anemones are a case in point.

These tiny orange-and-white fellows will defend their patch vigorously, aggressively darting out at intruders, including passing divers. They mature as males but a few will then become female and pair off with a dominant male. The couple take up residence in an anemone along with a group of smaller, younger males. Should the female die, her partner will do a swift sex change and take one of the young males as her mate.

Many wrasses, groupers and parrotfish have similar hermaphroditic tendencies - not that you see such gender gymnastics taking place in front of your eyes, but the knowledge of it adds to the wonder of the underwater world.

Life on dry land might seem a bit dull by comparison, but northern Sulawesi compensates with a generous sprinkling of active volcanoes (Mt Soputan last erupted in 1989), a few



sulphurous lakes and a crowd of good-time people who seem to spend every available opportunity singing and playing guitars. The Minahassans are renowned for their exuberance by other Indonesians - and also for their taste in food: in the sprawling market at Manado they do a brisk trade in rat, bat and dog meat.

And business, generally, is good. This is, by Indonesian standards, a rich area, supported by coconut, nutmeg and clove crops. Currently, there's some concern about the bottoming out of clove prices. "But now we've got a new tourist industry," my dive guide enthused. Indeed, investors are moving in: Novotel, for one, has seen fit to sink money into the area with a large hotel under construction in Manado.

It's difficult not to share the prevailing optimism of the locals and to hope that tourism will have huge benefits. Visitors come here principally to see the coral and its attendant wildlife, which means that the reefs must be preserved. And to this end the fragile underwater world around Bunaken island has already become protected as a national marine reserve.

## Up to the NEC in deep water

This weekend, Dive 96, Europe's biggest show for scuba diving, takes place at the NEC in Birmingham. As well as finding out about opportunities to visit coral reefs from Indonesia to Israel, Egypt to Antigua, you can also learn about underwater photography and conservation work currently under progress. There will also be an opportunity to scare yourself with the prospect of free diving - diving without the use of scuba equipment.

Beginners can try out the sport by kitting up and plunging into the shallows at the nearby Metropole Hotel where they'll receive free advice from professional instructors. Entrance: £7; (children under 14, £1.50). For more details call 0181-977 9878.

# Those who can, teach abroad

Speak English, and you can talk your way around the world. By Susan Griffith

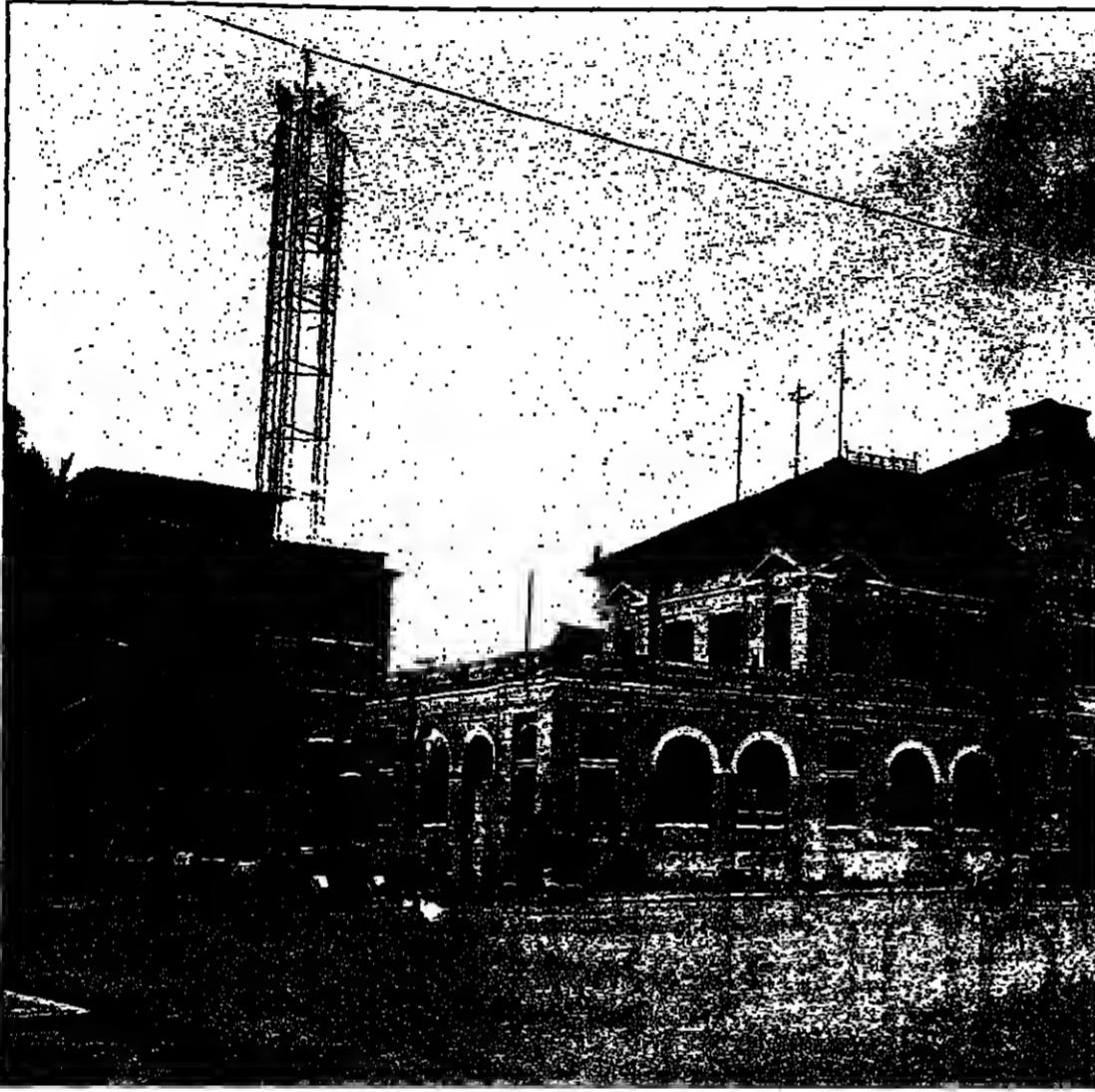
The fact that you are reading this suggests you possess a skill that could easily find you work abroad: English as a mother tongue. Thousands of students have decided is better to give than to receive (instruction). So instead of heading back to college this term, they are going abroad to teach English instead. Every morning the streets of Seville, Santiago and Seoul are thronged with people rushing to their English lessons. The demand for instruction or just conversation with people who speak English as their mother tongue is enormous.

A great many young Britons are setting off about now to capitalise on this market. The cautious and well organised ones do so under the wing of one of the specialist organisations that arrange for students in their gap year to teach English in Nepal, China, Bulgaria, Mexico or one of a score of other countries. Applications for these placements normally have to be made a year in advance, so now is a good time to think about the next academic year.

If you want to start wandering next week rather than next year, arranging a job in advance is still possible. A few agencies accept applications on a rolling basis. For example, an agency called Teaching Abroad can send people at very short notice to Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania, India and (from February) Ghana, to teach English while living with a family. The standard arrangement is for the mediating organisation to charge a fee (say £600-£750) for arranging a job and accommodation and providing local back-up. Travel expenses are extra.

Mostly (but not always) you need some sort of qualification for teaching English as a foreign language - TEFL in the jargon. Chains of language schools abroad sometimes interview teachers in Britain, and most of them expect some kind of TEFL profile. There are exceptions: for example the Nova Group, a major Japanese chain of language schools, has a London office that recruits teachers with a university degree year-round.

In less developed countries, schools come and go, and tend to choose their teachers from the bottomless pool of native English speakers on the spot, who also come and go. Knocking on doors is the



Phnom Penh: a language school on practically every corner

approved method. What many job-seekers find is that as private language schools around the world become more aware of recognised qualifications (principally the Certificates offered by Cambridge/RSA and Trinity College London after an intensive one-month course), many are more suspicious of backpacker English teachers.

However, those who can present an authoritative image often meet with success. An ability to make a class interesting and to remain patient in the face of slow progress are two key qualities that employers are looking for rather than methodological sophistication.

The norm is for a new arrival to town to increase the number of teaching hours very gradually. Getting three hours of work a day (early morning and early evening) is usually the easy part. As a freelancer, it is difficult to do more than subsist at first. Freelance teachers must be prepared for frequent holidays and last-minute cancellations to cut into earnings. It may be worth considering setting up as an independent tutor and offering private lessons at a rate that undercuts the institutes.

It may be necessary to consider less familiar destinations. Here are my top six, with a few tips on how to get a job:

Cambodia now has a booming commercial market supplying English language training. Rent yourself a bike for the day and have a spin around Phnom Penh. There's a school on practically every corner, many of which want to hire native English speakers. Casual teachers earn about £4 an hour in a country where you can live comfortably on £6 a day. TEFL qualifications can double or treble this amount.

Every issue of Venezuela's English-language paper, the *Caracas Daily Journal*, carries job ads for English teachers. Surprisingly, opportunities also exist on the popular resort island of Margarita.

**Teaching Abroad.** 46 Beech View, Ardingly, West Sussex BN16 4DE (01903 249888); **Services for Open Learning.** North Devon Professional Centre, Vicarage Street, Barnstaple, Devon EX32 7HB (01271 327319) - recruits graduates to teach in schools in Belarus, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia; **Teachers for Central & Eastern Europe.** 21 V5 Rakovska Blvd, Dimitrovgrad 6400, Bulgaria (00 359 0391 24787) - appoints native English speakers to teach in English language secondary schools in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia; **Nova Group.** Carrington House, 126/130 Regent Street, London W1R 5FE (0171-734 2727).

**Susan Griffith** is the author of *Teaching English Abroad*. The third edition will be published by Vacation-Work next month, price £9.99.

Korea absorbs huge numbers of foreign teachers at countless private language institutes (called *hogwans*) in the capital, Seoul, and Pusan, Korea's second city. Having some letters after your name makes the job hunt easier.

Bulgaria is one former Eastern bloc country that has not surrendered to the free market, so there are virtually no commercial language schools. However, the Ministry of Education is promoting an exchange programme through Teachers for Central & Eastern Europe, whereby graduates from the English-speaking world spend at least one term in an English-medium secondary school.

Turkey is a good choice of destination for fledgling teachers. Not only are there a great many jobs, but these jobs are often part of a package that includes free accommodation and a free return flight as an incentive (sometimes much needed) to complete a nine-month contract. Employers generally want to see a university degree and a TEFL certificate of some kind.

In Thailand, dozens of private language schools can be found around Siam Square in Bangkok, with a very high turnover of native-speaking English teachers. The basic hourly rate in Bangkok starts at 150 baht (just less than £4) which is somewhat higher than in Chiang Mai and less-visited Thai cities.

## last resort Nauru

# No bars, no visitors

When I arrived in Nauru, in the Pacific Ocean, the immigration officer automatically issued me with a transit visa. No one stays in Nauru for long. Not surprising given that, at 21 square kilometres, Nauru is metre-for-metre the most maligned country on earth.

If you've heard of it, that's probably because the entire economy is based upon mining prehistoric bird droppings and selling the "crop" to Australia and New Zealand as fertiliser.

Nauruans have had to endure constant scatological references to their country in the press. An example: when the native tried to show how cultured it is by bankrolling a West End musical based on the life of Leonardo da Vinci, one critic called it "slightly more entertaining than a pile of guano".

The next night, Mrs Amram's cheerful, charming daughter-in-law Wo-Wo took me fishing. We stood on the beach and fished with pieces of wire tied to Coke cans. In one riotous hour, we caught enough fish for dinner for the whole family.

Mrs Amram would take me to church where we would sing hymns in Nauruan. If I could erase all the knowledge the world has about Nauru and put something else in its place, it would be that the Nauruans can sing even better than digitally remastered bird-call CDs.

So, if you want package Polynesian holidays, go to Fiji. If you want to make friends with an entire country, go to Nauru. Tell 'em Cleo, the tourist of '96, sent you.

Cleo Paskal

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## trouble spots

Reports from areas popular with British travellers.

**France** The Interior Minister, Jean-Louis Debré, has vowed to lock up more separatists of the Corsican National Liberation Front (FLNC), which planted last Saturday's highly symbolic bomb in Bordeaux, causing damage but no casualties. Citing evidence that the militants were planning to step up violence in mainland France, M Debré deployed armed riot police to guard public buildings in Paris, Lyon, Marseille and Bordeaux - Reuter

**Sri Lanka (above right):** fighting between the security forces and the Tamil Tigers (LTTE) continues in the north and east of the country. Do not visit these areas. The south and centre of the island, including all the main tourist areas and the Cultural Triangle, remain largely unaffected. But there have been incidents in the Yala National Park - Foreign Office Travel Advice Unit, 0171-238 4503.



**Russia** drug-related offences are on the increase, and about one third of registered crimes were committed by people under the influence of alcohol, according to the latest crime figures published in Moscow. The overall trend in reported crime is down, however, with 4.5 per cent fewer incidents - Reuter

**US** the state of Virginia has outlawed the carrying of pocket knives with a blade of two inches or



**longer - Marine Guard, The Pentagon.**

**Colombia** the Lost City [in Colombia's Sierra Nevada] is in a marijuana-growing area that has experienced some guerrilla activity. Check with both the Colombian Embassy and Turcol (00 57 54 21 22 56) that tours are still running before leaving the UK.

**Papagayo**, the free newsletter from Journey Latin America, 0181-747 3108.

## visitors' book

**East Coast Explorer** (Larry Lustig's budget bus service linking New York with Boston and Washington)

**Amish tour** - very informative. Great cruising music, too - Anon, Australia.

Most enjoyed the mousaka pizza at Mystic Pizza. Test it - Wolfgang, Bavaria.

Nice change from the oorl boring bus ride - Doug.

Bookings: 001 718 694 9667.

## bargain of the week

If you are among those who predict that the General Election will be held next 1 May, and you wish to avoid it, you could leave the country on a cheap one-way ticket. For the first three weeks of May, Monarch Airlines (01582 398333) is selling seats from Luton to Malaga or Gibraltar for £72, including tax.

## a likely story

"The most comprehensive guide with the most up-to-date information" - *South American Handbook* 1997, on itself.

You can test this assertion, and meet the editor of the Handbook - and others in the new Footprints series - in London next Monday evening, 14 October. Stanford's bookshop at Campus Travel in Victoria is playing host to the editorial team from 6pm to 8.30pm. Tickets are free, but must be reserved in advance by calling 0171-730 1314.



# A tour of hot chocolate

Lorna and Zoe Downing indulge in Cadbury World

The saying goes that when there's rain in the air you can smell the chocolate wafting through the factory air vents on your approach to Cadbury World. So if you're heading for this chocolate emporium at Bournville, outside Birmingham, try to time your visit to coincide with a couple of black clouds.

Resist the temptation of hitting the Cadbury Trail first with its free samples and potted history. Instead, take a tour along the Factory Trail which winds through imposing Victorian factory buildings. By the time you pass go for the Cadbury Trail you will have worked up an appetite for your first free sample.

The give-away goodies are generous – and there's no point in taking your diet with you, or your hang-ups about acne. You are expected to have too much of a good thing here.

The chocolate experience is not all edible. It's educational, too. The Cadbury Trail unwraps the story behind the history of chocolate and the start of Cadbury's. Meanwhile, the factory packaging plant gives you a taste of what is involved in the production of Cadbury's chocolate and the demonstration area allows you to watch handmade chocolate being decorated.

Frankly, it is disappointing not to see rows and rows of factory workers supervising the 66,000 creme eggs which Cadbury produces every hour, but the days when you could take all your relatives, head-lice and all, around the factory floor ended in 1970 when new health-and-safety legislation was introduced. You just have to make do with imagining the eggs flying out of the machine at 50mph.

## The visitors

Lorna Downing, an office manager from Berkshire, took her 10-year-old daughter, Zoe, and young friend Tom to Cadbury World.

**Zoe:** I'm not a great chocolate fan so I didn't have any trouble stopping myself from eating it all the time. My friend Tom, who came with us, ate loads of it, though. By the time we were three quarters of the way around he looked quite green around the gills. It was nice, though, to be given such a box of free chocolate. It means I can either eat it gradually or share it with my friends.

I don't think this is the sort of place to come to if you're worried about your figure. But there's lots to see, and loads of information about chocolate. You get to see some of the original chocolate drink which they made in the rainforests. It had chilli in it and was pretty disgusting. Nothing like the chocolate we eat today.



Zoe Downing finds chocolate heaven

I enjoyed watching the handmade chocolate being decorated. It looked really good fun. The Cadbury Fantasy Factory was good, too, especially for small children, and there's an amazing hall of mirrors where you are completely surrounded by changing images of chocolate.

I think it's a good place to take schoolchildren as it's so well laid out and interesting, and the history of chocolate is very well explained.

**Lorna:** I've always been a bit of a chocoholic – but I'd never realised how fascinating a history it had. The Cadbury Trail takes you right from the beginnings of chocolate in the Central American rainforests, where the Maya Indians first harvested the cocoa beans, through to the mass production of chocolate bars and the creation of commercials

such as the Cadbury Milk Tray advert.

It gives a really good succinct history of the Cadbury brothers, who were a Quaker family with a philanthropic approach to the commercial world.

It goes without saying that the actual chocolate experience of Cadbury World was great. The temptation of freshly tapped chocolate that is only 20 minutes old was too much. I ate it straight away.

**The deal**

**Location:** Cadbury World is at Bournville Birmingham, junction 2 off the M42, junctions 2 and 4 off the M5, and junction 6 off the M6 (0121-451 4159). Price: adults, £5; children, £3.45; under 5s, free; senior citizens, £4.35 (Moo-Fri only); family ticket £14.50 (two adults and two children) or £17.50 (two adults and three children).

**Opening times:** 10am-5.30pm. Open daily throughout October, and at weekends and selected weekdays throughout November and December.

**Facilities:** free parking, picnic and play area; disabled access except in packaging plant; push-chair access except in production areas. Toilets positioned in reception area and half way around the Cadbury Trail. Restaurant: "Quite pricey and limited selection," said Lorna. "We paid £6.60 for fish and chips, a meat pie and one child's drink."

**Shop:** Plenty of souvenirs plus a bargain corner. Note: The packaging plant cannot be guaranteed to be working at all times.

**Nicola Swanborough**

Tel: 0171 293 2222

Jonathan Sale

Fax: 0171 293 2505

**Are we nearly there?**  
A weekly round-up of outings for children  
**Sweets**

Parents hoping to keep children away from chocolate are setting themselves an almost impossible task. They might as well enjoy their defeat by exploring the enemy strongholds and taking a tour round some of the sights where the goodies are manufactured.

**Rowlands Confectionary**, 17 Old High Street, Folkestone, Kent (01303-254723). Situated on the same old cobbled street – between the harbour and town centre – since the 1920s, the premises consist of a shop and also an area where you can watch work in progress. Entrance free. Shop open 9am-5pm daily – but no sweet-making on Wednesdays and Sundays.

**Ponferract Museum**, Salter Row, Pontefract, W Yorks (01977-722740). That's Pontefract with a capital "P", as in the town of that name; but the museum includes a section on ponferract with a small "p", as in the sweet. The liquorice plant from which ponferract is made seems to have been brought back from the Middle East during the Crusades. It has been grown, and used for sweets, in the town for centuries. John Betjeman wrote a poem beginning, "In the licorice fields of Pontefract, My love and I did meet". Entrance to museum free. Open daily 10.30am-5pm, Sundays 2.30-5pm.

**Chocolate House**, 1 Glenfield Park, Philips Road, Blackburn, Lancs (01254-581019). There are demonstrations here – by appointment – of the noble art of making chocolate products by hand. Chocolates, truffles, dinosaurs, bears, Santas, caramels and three types of fudge; it sounds like a modernised version of the fairy-tale Gingerbread House. All are created in a kitchen free from machinery, apart from a couple of mixers. The whole visit lasts two hours, during which there is a raffle of the *objets chocolates* which you have seen being conjured up. Entrance to demonstrations: £3 (£3.50 in November), under-16s free. No unaccompanied under-14s. The shop is open 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday (and some Saturdays).

**Dobsons Sweets**, Northgate, Elland, W Yorks (01422-372165). Groups of over 20 are shown the old-fashioned humbugs, drop-drops and toffees being created – and can taste them while still warm. The firm, founded by the present owner's great-grandfather, turns out five tons of confectionary a week. Visitors by appointment only; a family might be able to tag along with a larger group. Entrance £2.

Jonathan Sale

Fax: 0171 293 2505

## travel • overseas, uk

India

### Himachal Land of the snows

From December to February each year, a deep covering of snow turns Himachal Pradesh into a winter playground: Shimla has its own natural ice-rink; not far away are the ski slopes of Kufri; and for the truly adventurous there is the thrill of heli-skiing on untrammelled powder snow.

Why not combine skiing with a visit to Chandigarh, the city created by Le Corbusier in the 1950s as a dramatic vision of India's future. Or spectacular Dharamshala (adopted home of the Dalai Lama) and unspoilt Dalhousie, all nestling peacefully in the foothills of the magnificent Himalayas.

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POWELL'S POOL

POWELL'S PO

# Ten years of Independent travel

Here, there, everywhere: a decade of travellers' tales. Compiled by Omega Douglas



The depth of devotion to Cuba, the Caribbean's most dramatic island

Photograph: John Voos

**T**he idea of Australia as a package holiday destination may seem positively eccentric. London to Sydney is a flight of around 24 hours; if you take off from London at 6pm on Thursday evening, you arrive at Sydney (11 hours ahead of GMT) at around 6am on Saturday morning. Friday is no more than a passing blip of daylight glimpsed somewhere over the Middle East.

Twenty-four hours in an acroplane is a very, very long time – particularly if you're flying steerage in economy class. The journey becomes a series of unwatchable films followed by a succession of inedible meals.

Frank Barrett, December 1986

At the quayside restaurant in Ostend last week, the proprietor dried her hands on her apron and frowned: "After Zeebrugge, the British don't want to come to Belgium – it is very sad". The capsizing of the *Herald of Free Enterprise* was not Belgium's fault, but its tourist industry is suffering.

Others blame the continuing repercussions of the Heysel stadium riot two years ago for the downturn in British visitors. An old man in a bar repeated rumours of English cars left in the streets of Brussels being attacked. "That's absurd," said another customer. "In Belgium we love the British."

Jeremy Round, October 1987

Life in Manhattan is like mainlining on pure energy, and the British are getting hooked as cheap flights shuttle ever more furiously across the Atlantic and the exchange rate puts the cost of living within the budget of those without expense accounts. The city is now the top long-haul destination from the UK. But beware: you may find yourself blasted out of the torso of a sluggish winter yet in need of a rest when you return.

Hilly Jane, March 1988

Stepping out of the aircraft I was struck by the crisp mountain air and the brilliant blue sky. On the tarmac stood a line of troop-carrying helicopters, their five rotor blades giving them the appearance of giant khaki grasshoppers. The Mongolian soldiers on sentry duty wore inscrutable looks on their faces and gold "soyomos" on their epaulettes. The feeling was that I had landed in a country that only Tintin and his faithful bound Snowy could visit, a sort of people's republic of Shangri La. In reality I had arrived in Mongolia.

Nick Middleton, May 1989

Ballycastle is a handsome town, overlooked by the solitary mountain of Knocklayd – large, gently curved and symmetrical. A solid mid-18th-century church and an inviting inn, where I am to stay, dominate its centric. I watch a group of boys playing hurling with

sticks on the roadway while I eat a chunky chocolate ice cream bar and slake my thirst with three cans of Coke. The pleasure of walking is its simplicity: you just eat, drink, sleep and walk.

John Birt, November 1990

The ruins of Bamiyan were among the most spectacular on our route. A luxury office building where I had worked in 1987 was now a gutted ruin. Peaceful Christian quarters, untouched by fighting a few years ago, were now wind-worn with bullet holes and shellfire. On the Damascus highway, one hopeful had named his stall – amid the ruins of one mountain village – the Peace Café. But Lebanese soldiers on main intersections marshalled traffic with loaded rocket-propelled grenade launchers on their shoulders.

Hugh Pope, November 1991

At night, Blackpool comes up suddenly at the end of the motorway like Las Vegas on the desert. It shimmers on the Lancashire coast the way West Berlin used to if you looked at it from the other side of the Wall, a tantalising come-on, a glittering commercial for... excess. There's something potent in the promiscuous use of electricity, especially in these tight-assed days of conservation.

Reggie Nadelson, October 1992

Snowy is a place for weirdos. Always has been, always will be. Fishing weirdos, folk singing weirdos, weirdo weirdos – you name them. Bram Stoker holed up in a B&B here a century ago and penned his best known tale, in which two visiting lovelies, Lucy and Mina, reel around town, feeling oddly queasy and having funny turns on the cliff tops. The normal Whitby explanation for this sort of behaviour – a surfeit of Teely's and a crab sandwich that was a touch green at the edges – didn't stick, and so, thanks to Dracula, the place went up several rungs in the weirdo destination stakes, permanently, almost internationally.

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# A veritable spaghetti of pistes

The Italian mountains are among the most spectacular in Europe. By Chris Gill

**T**he weak lira has forced Italian skiing to the top of the agenda for many British skiers. Happily, the days are long gone when Italian resorts sold purely on price; you can now expect efficient modern lifts, state-of-the-art snowmaking and some of the most assiduous piste-grooming in the Alps. The Italian mountains are among the most spectacular in Europe, and are dotted with deliciously distracting mountain restaurants. The resorts range from valley towns to remote mountain retreats; here is a tour of the 20 most appealing.

Directly west of Turin, the road and railway make for the Frejus tunnels beneath the Alpine watershed to France. Just on the Italian side is Bardonecchia – a pleasant, town resort with a fair-sized intermediate ski area, the main drawback of which is a lack of altitude.

More interesting for a week's holiday is the Milky Way – with a claimed 400km of piste, one of the big linked areas of Italian skiing and indeed of the Alps in general. Suisse d'Outz is the Milky Way resort to head for. Low prices and an impressively extensive, partly wooded local ski area are again attracting large numbers of Brits, but its reputation as prime lager-lout territory is history. It is no beauty, but has the feel of a village, which is more than can be said for Sestriere, over the hill.

This high, bleak resort has reliable snow and some excellent skiing (it's the venue this winter of the world skiing championship). But it's a sprawling mess of a village, with poor access to the rest of the Milky Way. A better alternative is the modern ski station of Sansicario.

The next concentration of resorts, north-west of Turin, is around the long Aosta valley, which comes to a precipitous halt at the foot of Mont Blanc (Monte Bianco on this side of the frontier). Or it did until the mid-Sixties, when a road driven beneath the summit of Europe instantly made Courmayeur the most easily accessible resort in Italy. Despite the lorries thundering past, the old, partly car-free village is also one of the most captivating Italian resorts, with stylish shopping as well as varied nightlife. The Mont Blanc massif offers spectacular runs for good skiers, but the local ski area is rather small and monotonous, mainly appealing to red-run skiers. It does have comprehensive snowmaking, though.



In Italy you can expect state-of-the-art snowmaking and some of the best piste-grooming in the Alps

A few miles down the valley is La Thuile. It sounds French, and half the accessible skiing is actually in France – above La Rosière, visible across the Isère valley from Les Arcs. The road over the Petit St Bernard pass is a piste in winter, skirting a ski area that is not huge but has something for everyone. You can stay in a modern complex at the foot of the slopes, in the partly restored old mining

village a walk away, or in sprawling suburbs reached by bus.

Across the Aosta valley, side valleys stretch away towards a different border. Cervinia's skiing links with that of quintessentially Swiss Zermatt, but the connection is of little value – Zermatt's best skiing can't be reached in a day-trip. Cervinia itself is unique: nowhere else offers such an extent of sunny, snowsure,

gentle cruising terrain, free of nasty surprises; but advanced and adventurous skiers will soon get bored. Italian jollity goes some way to make up for the dreary, mainly post-war village; but there's something to be said for staying down the road in Valtournenche – not least the splendid home run at the end of the day.

In the next valley, although miles away by road, is the quiet, traditional village of

Champoluc, at one end of the three-valley Monte Rosa lift network embracing the even quieter villages of Gressoney and Alagna. It is no rival for the Trois Vallées (and in fact you have to ski off piste to get to Alagna), but the area offers a real sensation of travel on skis over friendly terrain, and the scenery is impressive.

Also close to the Swiss border but in the centre of the Italian Alps are several

more-or-less isolated resorts. Much the most compelling is Livigno: its killer combination of a fair-sized, high-altitude ski area and low duty-free prices attracts more British skiers than any other Italian resort. It's awkward to get to and to get around – the village sprawls for miles along its wide, bleak valley – but the buildings are traditional in style and small in scale, and the "car-free" centre (complete with petrol station) is pleasant.

Most people get to Livigno via Bormio, a medieval spa town that is much more difficult to recommend. Consider it only if you like red slopes, and don't mind a lack of flattering blues and challenging blacks; if you like the idea of polishing your intermediate technique on a few long runs; and if you're happy to choose between staying in the atmospheric but inconvenient centre of town and staying in a modern skier's suburb.

Madesimo's skiing is not much more extensive but it is much more varied. It's an attractive mountain village, despite modern expansion, but is reached by the world's scariest hairpin road.

Finally, in the north-east of the country, north of Verona and Venice, are the Dolomites, an area distinguished by mind-blowing scenery and an amazing amount of skiing, mainly of easy or intermediate difficulty. The necklace of runs around the Sella massif has few equals, and the Dolomiti Superski pass covers these plus hundreds of other lifts in separate resorts.

Selva is the best-known base – a lively village, traditional-style but not super-quaint – and is one of the best-placed for exploration of the region. Its local skiing has exceptional snowmaking coverage, too. But consider also Corvara for its direct access to the Alta Badia area (also accessible from San Cassiano), and tiny Arabba for its challenging, north-facing skings off the main Sella Ronda circuit.

The Dolomites are at their scenic best a few miles away around Cortina d'Ampezzo, the most upmarket of Italian resorts and a great place for leisurely lunches in the sun. Dramatic, pink-tinged spires and cliffs rise abruptly from the gentle slopes around the town, giving picture-postcard views throughout the ski areas. In a detached Dolomite area away to the west, Madonna di Campiglio is a sort of poor man's Cortina; the scenery may be not quite as spectacular, but the skiing is less fragmented.

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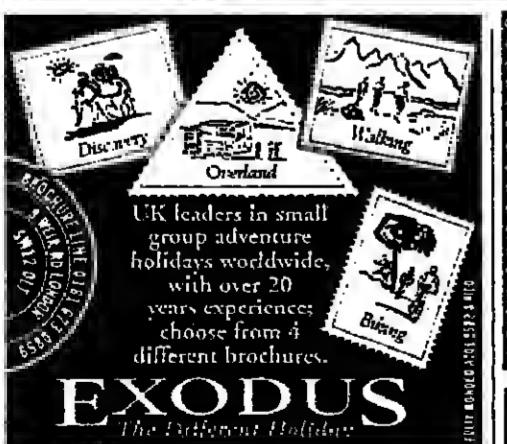
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# Do we still enjoy skiing?

In the old days we skied badly but cheerfully. If only that was still the case today

**S**ir Arnold Lunn's *History of Skiing* is full of good stuff. Did you know, for example, that skis "were in use in Great Britain long before they ever appeared in Switzerland"? Miners in Cumberland apparently used to "she" to work in winter in the 1840s. And were you aware that when the Swiss finally caught up, in the late 1880s, it was largely thanks to us? As Sir Arnold says, we can claim to be among the first to introduce skiing to Switzerland".

Much of his book is devoted to such matters: the unearthing of prehistoric skis from Swedish bogs, the ideological disputes (one ski pole or two?) between the Austrian and Norwegian schools of skiing in the late-19th century, and so on. But suddenly, on page 340, Sir Arnold turns introspective: chapter 28 is titled "Do we enjoy skiing?"

He has his doubts. In the old days, he says, "We enjoyed ourselves with the happiness of childhood... We skied badly, but we were cheerfully resigned to our incom-

petence". So dismayed is Sir Arnold by what has happened to the sport, "the Frankenstein which I have helped to create", that he is tempted to form an association for the discouragement of skiing. Among his proposals is that "a special staff of sandwich men with arms in slings and their heads in bandages, bearing large placards [saying] 'Victims of skiing accidents' would be engaged to hobble up and down platforms at Victoria and Charing Cross, in order to persuade outgoing visitors to abandon skiing".

The ultimate object of the association would be that "in time, the standard of skiing might be lowered to the primitive condition of happy inefficiency". Sir Arnold does not dispute "that British skiing has improved out of all recognition since the war... [But] do we ever enjoy skiing? I wonder. For we are always either skiing too fast, and frightened, or too slow, and ashamed".

I should perhaps point out here—if you haven't already guessed—that the war to

which Sir Arnold refers is the First World War; his *History of Skiing* was published in 1927. But the issue he raises is still relevant, probably more so. Now that we have got to grips with living in an age of leisure we have learnt to make most of our pleasures last. Think of your other favourite pastimes—perhaps sex, cooking or night-clubbing.

If they were meant to be done in a hurry no one would have invented foie gras or home-made pasta, and there wouldn't be clubs that open at 3am on Sunday morning when the others close. Yet with skiing, the better you get at it, the sooner it's over. It is, specifically, good skiing that has to be discouraged.

When it comes to being a spokesman for lousy skiers, I suspect that I am better qualified than Sir Arnold. But my position is more moderate than his: I firmly believe that everybody has the right to ski. All we

need is a policy of segregation, to protect the lousy skier from the pressure to become a good one.

For those whose heads are full of finger things than just powder and wax, a chairlift can be as much fun as the piste: the more you climb, the further away you get from cities, crowds and pollution; the view of the mountains becomes bigger and better, and the amount of skiing time you store up increases. As with altitude, so with mood: when you are up, you are up, and when you are down you are down.

So a lousy skier does not take a mad dash down the mountain side. With his "happy inefficiency" he makes the most of the benefits conferred by the chairlift (which, in Sir Arnold's day were much harder won, by walking up) descending in gentle traverses, stopping frequently to admire the view or hug a tree, and frightening no one.

Here lies the first argument for segregation. Beautiful slopes are wasted on good skiers—all they see is a blur—so the most attractive resorts, particularly those with wonderful runs winding through woodland, should be reserved for lousy skiers. Good skiers would, of course, be offered a suitable alternative such as Sierra Nevada in Spain, where most of the skiing is on a kind of motorway.

Perhaps, indeed, the Alps should be entirely devoted to lousy skiing: ecological groups such as Alp Actoo are particularly concerned about the damage done by off-piste skiing, and lousy skiers only rarely go off-piste because they are caring and environment-friendly people... and because it's so bloody difficult.

Secondly, it is axiomatic that lousy skiers use lifts less frequently than good ones—they must do, because they spend more time on the slopes. It is a matter of simple justice that they should be spared the queues generated by skiers who use the lifts over and over again.

Third, as resorts are segregated they will be better able to serve their particular clientele. Thus those for lousy skiers will have more and better restaurants on the slopes, because everyone will stop at them. Similarly, ski schools will specialise, with beginners' classes only in some resorts (a lousy skier must at least be able to ski) and flashy, advanced instructors in others.

Sadly, Sir Arnold Lunn, 79, to admit that his association for the discouragement of skiing was "an idle dream... Man is a competitive animal, whatever the Socialist may say".

My plan to protect the lousy skier has no future, either. What would happen? All the good skiers would want to go to their resorts, so they would learn how to ski badly. The crowding would be intolerable. (Sir Arnold's sub-text was that he wanted a bit more solitude: what would he make of Courchevel 1850 on a fine Sunday morning?) The only solution, then, would be to become a good skier. And that would destroy the object of the exercise.



Stephen Wood

## White art in the Alps

Richard Holledge slides through the Portes du Soleil

I was one of those mornings. Instead of the sun brightening the *dens du midi*, spurring me out of bed and on to my skis – fog. A deep, blanketing, dampening fog which made all thoughts of skiing out of the question. Except of course, you can't not ski when you have only six days a year to pursue the white art.

So grumbling about the cold, the damp, the lack of visibility, our reluctant band of adventurers perched on the snow-covered chair lift as it swung out of the little Swiss resort of Champoussin and consoled ourselves with the thought that in these conditions, several pit stops and a long lunch were entirely justified and would at least cheer the day.

Then something extraordinary happened. The chair reached about 2,000 metres, burst through the cloud and we found ourselves in bright, sparkling sunshine. Not a cloud to be seen, except below us. The mountains clear against the blue sky, the clouds furled like a great white flood around their upper reaches.

We could see for miles. Which was just as well, because Champoussin is one of the many villages and towns which make up the Portes du Soleil – an area of skiing which boasts 420 miles of pistes, 228 lifts and straddles Switzerland and France. I've skied the area a few times, mostly in rain and white-outs, and found it difficult to journey between range and valley, resort to resort. However well signed – and sometimes you have to be very sharp-eyed to pick up on the



Portes du Soleil, boasting 420 miles of pistes and 228 lifts Skidoo/Offshot

little signs on the Swiss side of the *domaine* – it makes a huge difference to be able to see not just the bottom of the run but into the next valley as well.

Heartened by the dramatic change in climate we resolved to ski to the furthest peak on the horizon, the Pointe de Nyon in Morzine.

The joy of the Portes du Soleil is in the feeling of getting places. You probably don't ski much more in a day than you would in a more compact ski area. But as you go from place to place, valley to valley, you feel as if you do.

From the top of Champoussin we scrambled through the new snow and back through the low-lying cloud to Les Crosets, a couple of hotels and bars and a link to the pretty Swiss village of Champoussin, and took a ride on the fast new four-seater chair into the Aoritz territory. At which point we settled for the

first hot chocolate of the day with a Wilhemina chaser – a rather fierce pear liquor – to quicken the heart.

Skirting Aoritz, rackety, modern, with apartment blocks like stalagmites, we cruised gently in the sun down a succession of blue runs – the kind of runs through woods and past mountain restaurants that you feel you could do all day – until the gondola which takes you into Morzine.

A determined stride through the town, (well, the driver of the *navette* which is meant to take you to the gondola refused stop), and we were in a completely new area of the circuit. Morzine has a different atmosphere to its brash neighbour, Aoritz. It is more sophisticated, has a better range of bars and cafés and a ski area linked to nearby Les Gets which is big enough in itself to sustain the intermediate skier for a week.

Now things got tense. The last lift back to Champoussin

leaves Les Crosets at 4.30pm sharp. We were at least eight lifts, one walk across town and six runs away. Received wisdom was that we had to leave Morzine at 2.30. It was now 2.45.

Valuable seconds were lost when one of the party elected to head back to Morzine; it got tense when the chair link to Aoritz stopped for five minutes; it got irritating when we turned left after Aoritz instead of right and had to clamber back up the hill.

It seemed sensible to spurn the challenge of the Chavanne, between Aoritz and Les Crosets. It is one of the most demanding runs of the area, a fact not helped by the fact that many people choose to go down on the chair and pour scorn on your endeavours when you finally reach the bottom, quivering and shaking. A narrow entry point, a big black sign which warns you of perils ahead and a series of huge moguls at the very top make it a run to attempt when you are feeling relaxed and confident and not rushing for the 4.30.

We opted for the direct route, slithered untidily down the slopes above Les Crosets and hit the connecting chair at 4.29. As I slid off the chair at the top, the lift clicked to a halt. Silence. The sun disappeared behind the range, the snow acquired that springtime, early evening, crunchiness and we shushed back to Le Poussin, a small friendly bar on the slopes in Champoussin. Only one challenge remained. Who was to buy the first round of *épis*?

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# Listening to the grapevine...

Anna Pavord visits a pocket vineyard squeezed behind a terrace in Hammersmith

could get drunk on the smell in our kitchen just now, let alone the brew that is responsible for it. It's damson wine. Three gallons of it are frothing with dangerous energy alongside the Aga. Gas escapes in regular bubbles through the airlocks, with the gurgling, poppy sound of tropical frogs. With each plop, the surrounding air becomes more heavily intoxicated. It's heaven.

Three years on, that brew will be rather more dangerous than port, though with the same delicious tendency to light up your innards. There's nothing like damson wine to make you aware of exactly where the gut and digestive tract are in your body.

We planted a couple of grape vines when we first came to our house, and trained them on wires along one side of a vegetable plot. My husband hoped to be able to produce vintage brews from these, but they've been a failure. I now learn from Jim Page-Roberts that we've got the wrong sort of vines. Riesling Sylvaner (Muller Thurgau). It's one of the most widely planted white wine grapes in the country, but with us it has been very prone to rot and mildew. You can spray, of course, but I want to drink wine, not cocktails of copper and sulphur.

Jim Page-Roberts is now on his third vineyard. That's if you can call a 10ft x 30ft back yard in Hammersmith, west London, a vineyard. I think you can. It's got 14 vines in it, which is 13 more than most of us grow.

Before he came to London, he had vineyards in Cambridgeshire and Hampshire. His star vine is 'Triomphe d'Alsace', but the French, he says, are snobby about it because it's not a "classic" *Vitis vinifera* variety. After experimenting with most vines that can be cultivated in this country, he now grows only those that will produce a crop without the prop of sprays.

"I was at a vineyard in Cahors in France – that was when I made a living writing about wine – and I saw grapes there being harvested that were absolutely blue with copper. Commercial growers spray at least seven times with copper during the growing season and three times with sulphur. I wanted to grow without spraying."

His vines are trained up and along the brick walls that make boundaries either side of the garden and over four strong steel reinforcing rods that hoop over the yard from one side to the other. You walk down the garden under a canopy of vine leaves and dark bunches of grapes, all of them tantalizingly just out of reach of your mouth.



Jim Page-Roberts and star vine 'Triomphe d'Alsace'

At the end of the garden is a small octagonal hut, just big enough for two chairs and a table, where Jim Page-Roberts can sample his wines and admire the patterns of leaves and fruit that the sun throws on the paving slabs under the vine tunnel. It's like being in a room done out in William Morris wallpaper.

His 'Triomphe d'Alsace' is a monster, trained on a single stem up the left hand, south facing wall, over one of the hoops, along the top of the right-hand wall, right the way round behind the hut and then back to meet itself again on the left hand wall. All along the stem, spurs break out, hung with bunches of small black grapes. And there's not a blotch of mildew anywhere.

"Any day now he'll be picking the grapes and making his Hammersmith Nouveau. Red wines are very much easier to do in this country than white ones, he says, and his method – oow that his wine is for home consumption only – is very simple. He doesn't use a press. He doesn't jump up and down on the grapes in the bath. He has the same method as we have with our damson wine: stripping the fruit into a bucket, adding yeast and sugar and then draining off the resulting brew into a glass demijohn to ferment. But he drinks his wine young.

The best way, he says, with English reds. He makes three dozen bottles each year from his 14 vines.

In winter, you have to prune, for in our climate and soil, vines grow vigorously. If you leave it until spring, when the sap is rising, the vine bleeds copiously.

How copiously, I never knew until Mr Page-Roberts told me. He'd experimented, of course, cutting off a large branch of his 'Triomphe d'Alsace' in spring. It produced a pint of sap every nine hours for 13 days before the cut healed over and the flow was stanchured. He had tried stopping it himself, with bitumen, with tourquise, with a red hot iron, but to no avail.

"And did the vine die?" I asked with huge anxiety. "No" he replied briskly. "It made no difference whatsoever. It grew just as well that season as ever before."

Still, I'm not sure the vine would survive repeated attacks of that kind. Best to stick to the dormant season. Pruning is not difficult once you understand why you are doing it. It can be rather like wine drinking though. Some people think it is more fun to baffle newcomers than to enlighten them. And (like drinking wine) you learn fastest about the subject by doing it, rather than reading about it.

You must have some kind of support to train the vine on. Tie the single stem in as it grows and then spur prune it each winter. A spur is the name for the point where a side branch breaks away from the main stem. You need to cut back the side branches leaving just two buds-worth of each branch at each spur. The grapes will be produced on the canes that grow from these spurs in the following season.

In summer, the pruning need not be so calculated. You just chop back leafy growth where it is over-exuberant, so that light and air can get through to the fruit. In commercial vineyards, this is now done with mechanical hedge cutters. Take heart from that and remember it the next time you open a book and panic at the sight of guyot, double-guyot, Geneva double-curtain, Kniffen and multiple cordon pruning systems for vines. Pruning is a game, gardener against plant, and experienced players like finding ever more complicated ways of playing it.

The other great success in Jim Page-Roberts's garden is the strawberry vine, generally listed as *Vitis vinifera* 'Fragola'. It is better for eating than for wine making, he finds, as the grapes give a slightly foxy taste to wine. "Interesting in blends," he says, "but an acquired taste on its own."

His fruit turn rich strawberry pink when they are ripe, but he says there are similar clones that produce green or black fruit. The vine is healthy, never needs spraying, but unlike 'Triomphe d'Alsace' does not produce leaves suitable for stuffing. They are rather thick and fleshy. As the grapes ripen, the foliage turns yellow, with the veins standing out prominently in green.

He's waiting now for a cutting of a vine grown by a Kent enthusiast with whom he's corresponding. Called by the *Guinness Book of Records* the Dartford Wondervine, he thinks it's probably *Vitis riparia*. It produces for its owner, Leslie Stringer, a staggering harvest of 2,000 kg of grapes a season. Containing in that a garden 30ft x 10ft will tax even Mr Page-Roberts's ingenuity.

Both 'Triomphe d'Alsace' and 'Fragola' are available mail order from B R Edwards at Sunnybank Farm, Llanveynor, Herefordshire HR2 0NL (01873 860698). Mr Edwards sells the widest selection of vines in the country. Send a stamped, addressed envelope for the full list. For an engaging account of Jim Page-Roberts's experiments with vines read his book 'Vines and Wines in a Small Garden' (The Herbert Press £14.99).



## cuttings

David Berkley of Bridgwater writes with a problem about pears. "We have a 'family' pear tree originally with 'William's Bon Chretien', 'Louise Bonne' and 'Conference', planted in 1973. How do we know when to harvest and how to store? Occasionally we get one that is just perfect, but more often they are either wooden or rotten. Perhaps we have the wrong varieties?"

The 'William's Bon Chretien' should be the first to ripen and should be picked while still green (usually in early September) just as soon as the stalk of the fruit will part easily from the tree. Then the fruit should be stored in a cool place for one or two weeks and eaten as soon as they start to soften. It's a fabulously flavoured pear, but susceptible to scab, unless it has perfect soil to grow in.

'Louise Bonne of Jersey' and 'Conference' are both slightly later to come into season than the 'Williams'. They should be ready to eat during late October and November. But, again, the fruit should be picked as soon as it will part from the tree and stored in cool place to finish ripening. They will usually take between one and four weeks to reach their peak. Once there, they go off very quickly.

It was quite odd of the grower from whom Mr Berkley bought the family pear to put 'Williams' and 'Louise Bonne' on the same tree. They are well known to be incompatible in terms of pollination. His 'Conference' must be working very hard to cover both the other varieties as well as itself.

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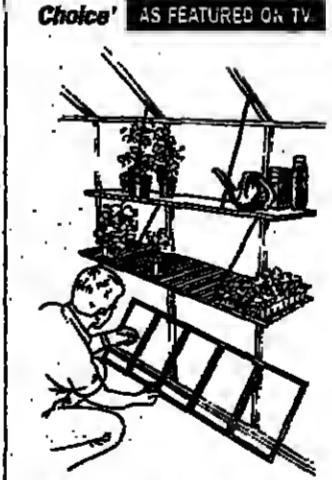
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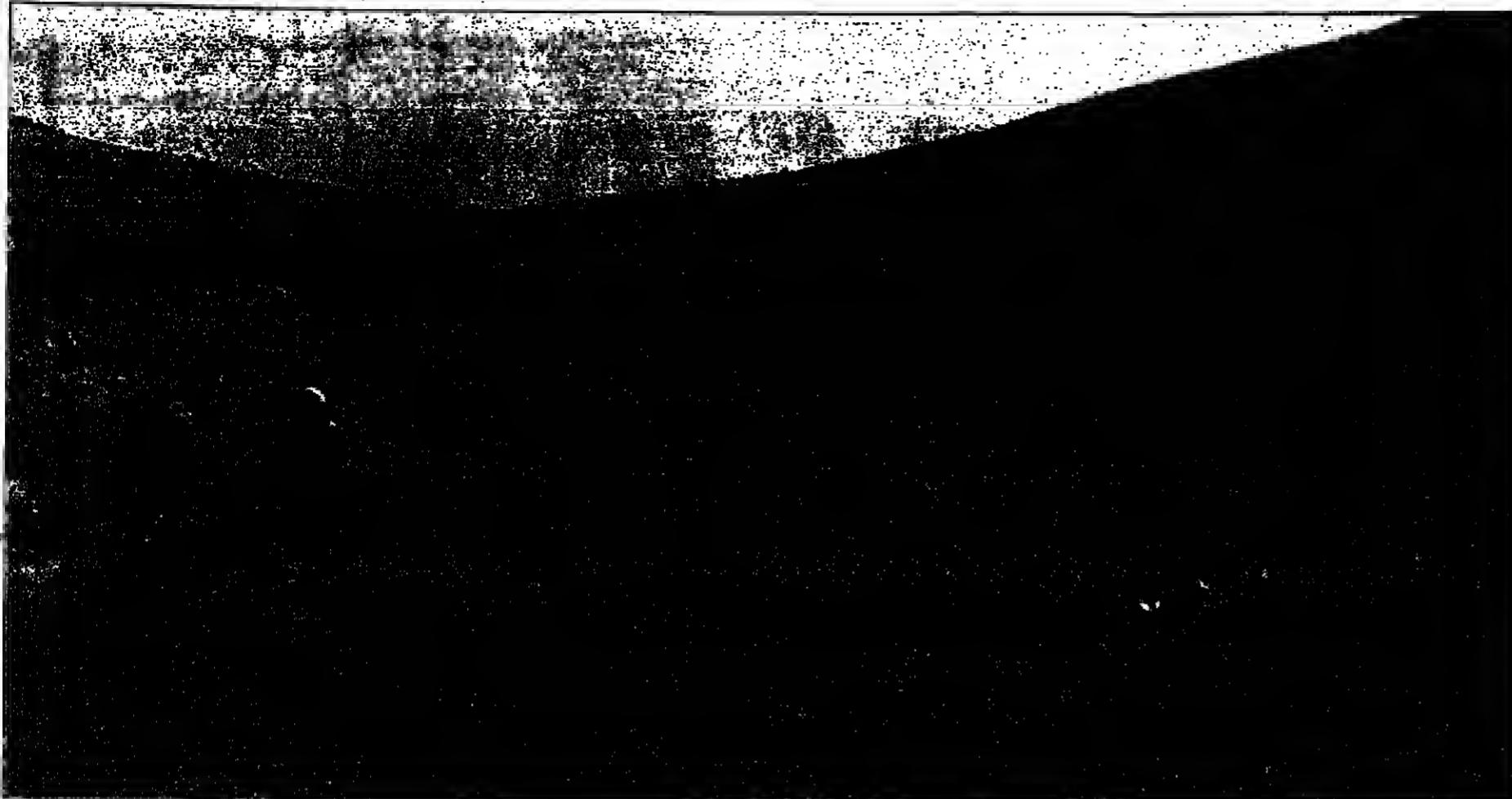
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# ...and striding out for a beer



A taste of the spectacular walks

## country walks

### Worth Matravers, Dorset

The south-west coast has one of England's most spectacular long-distance walks, stretching for 500 miles from Poole Harbour to Land's End and back along the Bristol Channel and into Somerset. For those without a month to so spare to follow the whole route, this four-mile walk around St Aldhelm's Head in Dorset will give at least a taste of the experience.

The large car-park in Worth Matravers, complete with information boards and public toilets, suggests that tourism has long replaced quarrying or Purbeck stone as the most important local industry. Once the crowds of summer visitors have gone, however, the Isle of Purbeck can seem curiously remote and bleak. Walking from the car park past the Square and Compass Inn, the village centre, with its pretty little duck-pond, looks far too cosy to belong to such a wind-swept landscape.

The route down to the coast, signposted to Winspit, passes by a row of cottages before leading through a gate out into open fields. The sea lies straight ahead, the horizon framed by grassy hills, East Man and West Man, their steep slopes terraced with the contours of medieval lynchets. Beside the path, a stream-bed, densely overgrown with hawthorn, ash and ivy, cuts an ever-deepening gorge down to the sea.

The coastal path to St Aldhelm's Head is clearly marked above the shore at Winspit, but it is worth pausing to explore the old stone quarries that honeycomb the cliffs. Gigantic galleries, 100 feet or more in depth, are cut into the rock-face, supported on slim columns of uncut Purbeck stone.

Returning to the coastal path, the route climbs steadily towards St Aldhelm's Head. In places perilously close to the cliff edge, with unwelcome glimpses of the boiling surf 300 feet below, this is not a walk for those without a head for heights. Even meeting other walkers can occasionally challenge the conventions of good manners through a fear of stepping out

politely into space with a final cheery comment on the view.

From the coast-guard look-out on St Aldhelm's Head, some 50 miles of coastline can be seen, from the Isle of Wight to Portland Bill. There is a most unusual Norman chapel square, unadorned and massively constructed to withstand the elements. Deeply etched graffiti on the stonework of its dim interior suggest that "tagging" was a well-established custom even in the 18th century.

For those whose need for exercise is wanting by this point, a straight and level track pro-

vides a short-cut back to Worth Matravers. Continuing along the coastal path, the more determined walker is rewarded with some stunning views of wild cliffs and wooded valleys; an enormous and unbleached landscape as fine as any to be seen on the south coast. The closer prospect is rather less appealing: a steep descent almost to sea level, followed by a weary climb back above 300 feet.

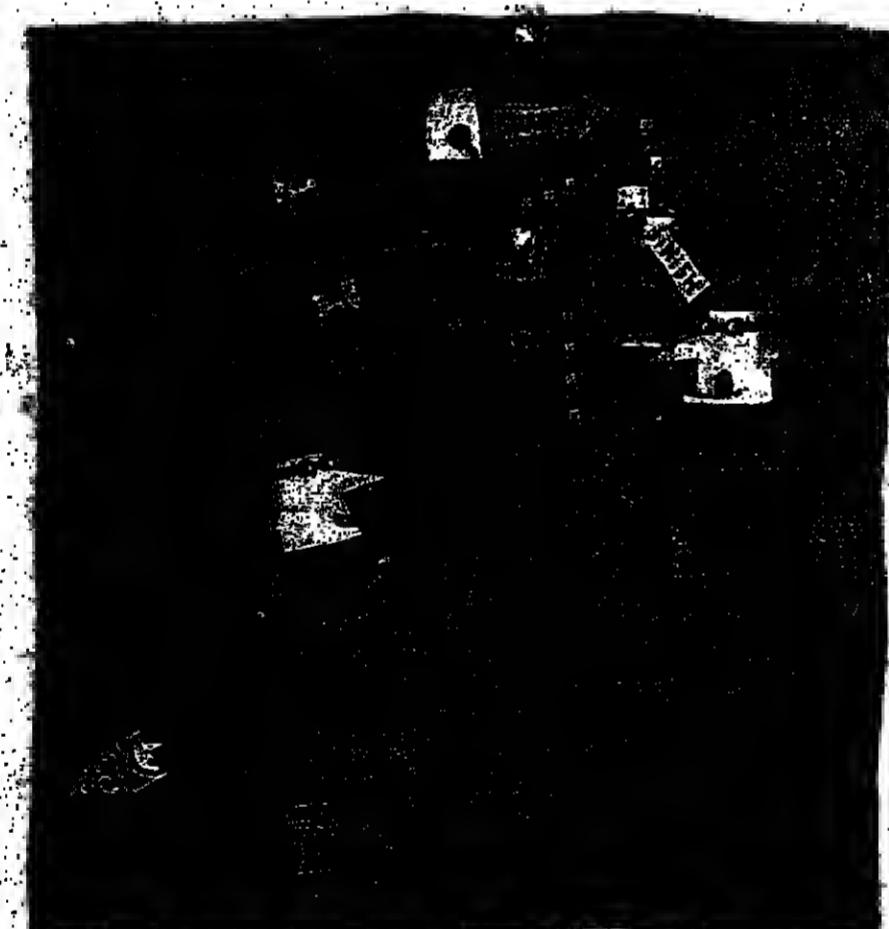
The route back to the village diverges from the coast path just inland from Chapman's Pool, a sheltered bay of clear, still water far beneath the cliffs. At Weston Farm, the path

becomes a tarmac lane leading back to the familiar duck-pond and, far more importantly, to the inn-sign of the Square and Compass. This pub was once a favourite hang-out of Augustus John and is still defiantly eccentric in both its management and decor. Farmyard fowl peck around the outdoor tables, perching on assorted lengths of rope and driftwood that fall somewhere between installation art, an adventure playground and the collection of a ship-wrecked sailor. Indoors, there is nothing so cew-fangled as a bar, just a serving hatch and rooms the colour of tobacco, with benches round the walls. The landlord, Charlie Newman, is the fourth generation of his family to run the Square and Compass and shows no inclination to alter its atmosphere. Food is very basic, but the homemade pasties are delicious and the beer beyond all criticism. With a view across the valley to the sparkling sea beyond, it is a memorable destination for a walk.

Hamish Scott

Worth Matravers is signposted from A351 between Corfe Castle and Swanage. The car park is to right of road on entering village.

- From the car park, follow the lane down into village, bearing right at Square and Compass inn.
- Bear left at the duck pond, following the sign to Winspit.
- Twenty yards down the lane, turn left down a drive in front of terraced cottages.
- Follow the footpath sign through a gate into open fields.
- Continue for one mile until you reach Winspit quarries.
- Returning, 100 yards from quarries, follow waymarked path to St Aldhelm's Head.
- At St Aldhelm's Head, continue along the coastal path for Chapman's Pool. There are easy shortcuts back to Worth both from the headland and the bottom of steep valley.
- Above Chapman's Pool, turn right over the stile on a waymarked path to Renscombe Farm.
- Cross the farm lane and continue on the footpath past Weston Farm to Worth.
- Continue past the duckpond to the Square and Compass (01929 439229).



# Ploughing the competition

Richard D North follows the field from horse to tractor

There is something so lyrical and moving about the business of ploughing – the soul-polished plough cleaving the crucifying earth – that it's good to note that there was a fine, worldly reason for the formation of the Trumpet Ploughing Match in 1944.

According to Douglas Probert, retiring president of the Trumpet and District Agricultural Society (the Trumpet is a famous pub and crossroads outside Ledbury in Herefordshire): "The war was in full swing. Petrol was rationed, so you couldn't go anywhere for a social occasion. But you were entitled to go to a ploughing match – that was all right. You could legitimately go to that sort of thing". There was also the natural fierce competitiveness of young people – even those involved in what looks a quiet and not obviously sporty business such as farming.

The oddest thing about the modern ploughing match, such as the Trumpet's held last Thursday or the National Championships which will be held today and tomorrow, is that they look now just as they

must have done during and after the war. There is, of course, the same array of tents, and the buildings of the host farm may well not have changed much. The matter of old macs, and serviceable tweeds and wellies is more or less an unchanging one. But what no one could have predicted is that horses have made a comeback for competition purposes.

Stan Hill, now 76, has

ploughed at nearly every

Trumpet match, and won quite

a few (he took a third in 1944,

but had progressed to a first in 1952). He doesn't plough now, but judges others instead, as he did on Thursday. He was one of the pioneers of a way of getting a living in the country which is now very common for the young of farming families: after the war he bought the best tractor he could afford and put himself to work as a contractor. He had begun to work with horses, of course. "I worked with them until about 1938. I had worked with them since I was eight, and by the time I was 14, I could do any work with horses," he says.

Mr Hill always enjoyed his tractors, and thinks he's had a brilliantly interesting life. "Mowing, reaping, ploughing, planting, wood cutting – that was my year, always varied." And the work getting faster and faster. As tractors finally outnumbered horses in the fifties, they also got bigger: in 1944, a decent tractor was 25 horsepower, in 1984 it was 80 horsepower, and nowadays giants of 120 horsepower are common.

Mr Probert points out that a 12-acre field behind his

house at Shucknall near Ledbury is now "ploughed, worked and ploughed by a tractor in a day; a Standard Fordson tractor would take four days just to plough it, and you'd want good going for that." The Fordson itself was twice as fast at least as a team of horses. No wonder Dolly and Boxer were off to the knacker's. No wonder, either, as Stan Hill reminds us, that he and his sort could only feed a beleaguered nation with the help of plenty of mechanisation.

Sometime in the late Sev-

enties, many of the older

ploughmen realised they were missing the old ways, and began the current vogue for vintage ploughing. It has lured back to the tractor seat some men long used to bossing others from the wheel of a four-by-four.

Ploughing championships

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more details contact The

Society of Ploughmen, 01302

852469.



## Duff Hart-Davis

"16,000 letters of objections forced planners to accept their ideas were unpopular"



they are about to make an attempt to gauge grass-roots feeling.

Meanwhile, the most local threat is to Cirencester, which is anxiously awaiting a decision by the Environment Minister, John Gummer, on whether or not he will sanction the creation of two non-food retail parks on the outskirts of the town. Mr Gummer has professed his belief that small town centres should be protected – but has he the power or the guts to put words into practice?

The centre of Cirencester is still amazingly intact. The broad, slightly curving Market Place is flanked by fine stone houses; street markets, held here since Domesday, still take place on Mondays and Fridays. Excellent shops – both in the Market Place itself, and in the narrow streets winding off it – make the town a very attractive place in which to stroll, chat, window-shop or buy things.

Two facts are clear. One is that locals loathe the idea of retail parks; a petition against the developments was signed by 4,000 people, with not one vote in favour. The other certainty is that the establishment of two parks would deal a deadly blow to traders in the centre of town. Already two new supermarkets on the fringes, a Tesco and a Waitrose, have drawn off much business. Small traders might survive one park, but not – it is generally agreed – two.

According to Peter Stringfellow, proprietor of the Crocodile toy shop and a leader of the opposition, the Cotswold District Council has made "a bloody nonsense" of the whole affair. "When the first application came in, from Bannertown Developments," he says, "Mr Gummer hadn't started to talk about rejuvenating town centres, and the council was minded to approve. When the rival, Kimberley Securities, applied to build on a site slightly closer to the centre, councillors were marginally in favour of that. In fact they don't want either." The result has been a public inquiry, with the decision referred to the minister.

I find it astonishing that councillors could have given the proposals any encouragement whatsoever. Have they not visited Stroud, whose centre is now a wasteland of boarded-up shops? Have they not seen how the middle of Tewkesbury has been gutted by out-of-town development?

Come on, minister! Even if it is one of the last constructive decisions you make in the present Parliament, for heaven's sake take a tough line and give the lie to the north-country verse which ends: "And a toothless ewe is a gummer."

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# money & homes

## The buying game

The house market is looking buoyant, says Penny Jackson

There is good news for those people wondering why all the activity in the property market stops short of their front door. Houses are selling faster than at any time in the past year, say Black Horse Agencies. Confidence in the market has meant buyers are acting more decisively, and first-time buyers are coming on to the market as they see prices rising. One in four homes sells in six weeks or less, according to Black Horse Agencies' Home Report, published this week. It takes an average of 16 weeks for a property to find a buyer, an improvement of five weeks since June.

The report looks at the trends, region by region, of the residential property market. It does, however, exclude most of London, as well as Scotland and Wales where Black Horse has no branches. The survey looks into such areas as the number of viewers per property, how close the sale price is to the asking price, breakdown of buyers, how much first-time buyers pay, and the speed of sale from first instruction to an agreed price. There is a connection between categories. The fastest selling areas will be most likely to see sellers getting all (or a figure closest to) the asking price.

In the South-east, which accounts for most of the top 10 "hot spots", properties sell at 95 per cent of the asking price. Meanwhile, in the slower North-west, with its average 23-week sale, homes sell at 91 per cent of the full price.

A year ago, as a national average, a £100,000 property would have sold for £92,000, while today it would be sold for £94,000. Black Horse sees this increase as the strongest indicator yet that prices are stable. But prices have to be pitched sensibly, says Alan Gottschalk, East Midlands regional director. Anyone selling a home with an obvious drawback may well have to lower their sights. "In Chelmsford, for example, we have two identical flats for sale. One sold quickly, the other is difficult because it backs on to a noisy road." And he said that in Coventry a family house with an extension was proving much harder to sell than its smaller counterpart in the same street, because people are put off by the poor state of the house next door. "Buyers are still cautious. They know what they should be paying."

So how is the market working in practice in one of the Black Horse hot spots? David Freeman lives in Hedge End, near Southampton, a fast-selling area with new developments. He has just put his one-bedroom, Bovis home on the market, and a sale was agreed within a day. In turn, he found a house he liked in 12 hours. In less than a week he had bought and sold. "I put my house on at £42,950, undercutting others by a thousand, and sold it for £41,000. But it is only recently that property has started to sell well here."

Caroline Helps, also from Hedge End, is well aware of a sudden upturn. She and her husband put their three-bedroom semi, built seven years ago, on the market in May. Nothing happened until the beginning of this month when it was taken on by Black Horse. "We sold it almost the next day. We put it on at £66,250 and accepted £65,000, which is what we wanted."

An acute shortage of good property is the chief complaint of agents across the country, and breakdown of buyers in the home report goes some way towards explaining this. In the survey, 65 per cent of all purchasers have nothing to sell. The majority are first-time buyers, about a tenth are stepping back into the market after renting or staying with family and friends and a small number are buying for investment.

First-time buyers now tend to skip a rung of the property ladder. Easy mortgage terms and a market which has not returned to 1988 levels, means they are going straight for a house.

In Plymouth, one of the 10 hot spots, developers are even converting flats back into single houses. "Flats sell at auction for under £10,000. Nearly everyone can afford a small terrace house here," says Edward Heaton of Stratton Creber. "We have never had such a good year as this. We are even selling what I call the old dogs. But we are desperately low on stocks."



## Who's been sleeping in my bed?

If you've ever wanted to know who used to live in your house, help is at hand. By Sophia Chaudhury-Stuart

Would you like to find out the history of your home? You may have met the people that sold it to you but what about the people who lived there 50 years ago, or the Victorian owners who first landscaped the garden? Some design devotees might want to know why the hallway was extended or when the attic was converted. Having a detailed history of your property might also add to its value, especially if you uncover fascinating facts of historical significance.

Penny Olsen, who owns the Research Workshop, spends her time answering these questions. To her business clients, Olsen is a historical architectural researcher; others call her the house detective.

Olsen became interested in the history of buildings after her children had grown up. She embarked on an Open University course in

architecture. The Conran group saw Olsen's thesis on the Michelin Building and used her work as part of their planning application for the Bibendum restaurant. Olsen was encouraged by this. "I thought, well, if the Conrads think my work is useful, maybe other people will, too."

She sent out dozens of letters to property developers and got two jobs immediately, to research one site in the City of London, another in Reading, for brochures of the area.

When the property development market went into a slump during the recession, Olsen changed tack and targeted her work more at private individuals who wanted to know more about their family home. She now numbers famous film and television personalities among her clients as well as members of the aristocracy. "I love what I do. My

work is like a jigsaw, piecing together information, bit by bit, until I have the whole picture."

Olsen builds up her historical jigsaw using maps of the area from a variety of different periods, planning applications, land tax assessments and even drainage records. Structural and interior design details help her plot the course of the property's development while rate books, cross-referenced with census returns, electoral registers and marriage records give clues of previous residents.

"Sometimes clients just want a list of names of people who have lived in the house through the years or a simple report of its historical backgrounds. Other people want a full-blown story, beautifully presented. I often work to a budget and a lot of my work for private customers is in producing surprise gifts for family members."

Each project takes up to six months; prices range between £250 and £3,000 and are presented as either a slim sheaf of papers between simple card or full leather-bound book, complete with pictures of previous residents, maps of the area and original elevation plans of the property at various stages.

"Sometimes the information is quite easy to find. But I had one building that was in a remote area and I wasn't sure I would be able to establish much. However, with a few days of research I found out that the building had been owned by Balliol College, so a wonderful archive existed."

One set of clients was delighted to find out that their house was once used as a flagellation brothel. Other stories are not so uplifting. She decided not to tell one set of owners that their home was built on a plague pit.

Visitors' books can also be a rich source of history. Olsen unearthed one that the Kray twins signed on their regular tea-time visits to the property. Olsen's own visitors' book is signed by Elizabeth Taylor and Liberace. Both were customers at the chemist shop she and her husband owned on the King's Road during the Sixties.

Local archives and local people play a great part in her work. Older people's memories of events, scandals and personalities provide a sense of how the area grew in a way that statistics cannot.

Ironically, she has never had time to research the houses she has lived in. "The owners of our old house have asked me to look into the history of the property for them. I can't wait to see what I find."

The Research Workshop 0171-935 2360

# Divide and prosper

Flats are a growing market, says Rosalind Russell

**T**he second Baron Carrington had a reputation for eccentricity. When he took a lease on Gayhurst House, an imposing country mansion near Newport Pagnell, he provided his male servants with a remarkable five-seater lavatory in a circular building behind the house, surmounted by a carved figure of Cerberus, the three-headed dog. He lived in style, with his wife, five children, a chaplain and 31 servants. Now 26 households share Gayhurst – split up into flats and houses in the Seventies – and with its ornate multi-tiered windows, formal gardens and garages, is far superior to other converted flats.

A one-bedroom apartment in Gayhurst will cost £97,500, say agents GA, for the 100 years remaining on the 120-year lease.

Buying a leasehold flat is now less of a lottery, thanks to the new changes to the Landlord and Tenant Act 1987. Initially hailed as the leaseholders' charter, the Act was found to be shot through with holes. While it gave tenants the right to first refusal of their freehold, the freeholder didn't face a penalty if he thumbed his nose at the Act. Now he does.

A few lunatic freeholders and resideants who quibble about their share of the roof repairs will always be with us. And anyone considering buying a flat should still take particular interest in the efficiency of the managing agents. But flats still have advantages over houses for young professionals, older people trading down from an expensive house, or as a rental investment. While leaders won't generally offer a mortgage on an ex-council tower block or flats above shops, the rest of the flat sales market is enjoying a mild boom. Especially in Birmingham and in London where there is busy regeneration in areas like Bermondsey, Clerkenwell and Soho.

Paying £300,000 for a flat in the centre of Birmingham – albeit a penthouse – might have seemed optimistic a couple of

years ago. But that's the price being asked on one of the flats soon to be completed by Crosby Homes, next to Birmingham Symphony Hall, Symphony Court, with octagonal domed towers and private terraces overlooking the canal, residents' gym, underground parking and high security, has drawn buyers back to the city centre.

John and Vanessa Clarke sold a house in Walsall and bought a two-bedroom flat in the block, so they could be near their daughter Louise, 16, who will be studying in the city. Others buyers are finding the flats an attractive investment, with rentals on a two-bedroom apartment achieving a far higher percentage yield than anything currently offered by banks or building societies. For Crosby the development has proved one of their most successful. With 112 apartments sold and only 30 left to sell, asking more than a quarter of a million for a penthouse doesn't seem so daft.

In London, Strutt & Parker is selling a one-bedroom, second floor flat above Terence Conran's Mezzo restaurant in Soho for £310,000. In suburban Putney, that would buy a three-bedroom house, but a much longer commute to work.

Says Charles Peartree of Winkworth's West End office: "Buyers in Soho and Covent Garden tend to be ABC1, mid-thirties, affluent, from bankers to creative. Fitzrovia is the best value for money, being quieter than Covent Garden but having more life than Bloomsbury. It's not a family area, which is something our business reflects... we don't open on Saturday."

Prices are sufficiently buoyant for Winkworth to have recently sold a one-bedroom flat, directly opposite a 24-hour shelter for the homeless, for £150,000. A one-bedroom, fourth-floor walk-up in King Street, Covent Garden has just sold for £185,000. In the three weeks between compiling the latest copy of the Winkworth property guide and it hitting the stands in

branches, the West End office has sold everything on their page bar two flats.

"Look for the well-run blocks," says Peartree. "Bloomsbury's Bedford Court Mansions is one of the best because it's part-freehold. Ridgemount Gardens where a four-bedroom flat will cost around £265,000, is also very popular. Of the new developments," says Peartree, "the ones which are selling fastest feature contemporary design, wooden floors and chrome fittings." It's a perfect description of a redeveloped printing works at one Dufferin Avenue, near Moorgate tube station.

Of the eight apartments put on the market a fortnight ago, only three are unsold. Architect/developer Roger Black has aimed at style-conscious buyers likely to be impressed by the German column radiators, ash flooring and "pod" bathrooms. Prices range from £175,000 to £215,000; the most expensive has a timber-deck roof terrace with views over the City. Selling agent is Hurford Savills.

Actor Al Pacino is leading the way in Bermondsey, buying into the new Tanners Yard apartments, a few minutes from Tower Bridge and close to where the new Jubilee Line extension will run. More than half have been sold or reserved in the old warehouse building. The developer says their buyer profile is young, upwardly mobile professionals. Prices range from £139,500 to £199,500.

Shad Thames, a previously unloved area south of Tower Bridge, is also being talked up. A former tea and coffee warehouse in Boss Street is being turned into 109 flats, due to be ready for Christmas.

Tom Marshall of selling agent Charrons says: "The refurbishment includes glass lifts, glass viewing platform with panoramic views." More sandblasted brickwork – the woodchip of the Nineties – cast-iron columns, wooden floors and industrial-style windows.

Top: Docklands apartments made for young professionals. Above: a Roger Black interior, for the style conscious



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# It's good to be back in control of my cash

Gary Glitter's biggest mistake



## Benefit trap for the middle class

The job seekers' allowance has pitfalls if you have savings or insurance cover, Stephen Ingledew warns

A serious "earthquake" shook the welfare state this week when on Monday unemployment benefit, one of the traditional cornerstones of the social security system, was abolished and replaced by the job seekers' allowance (JSA).

The new benefit is a further example of the Government attempting to reduce social security spending, particularly on middle income earners, and target benefits to the most needy. It follows the reduction a year ago in income support in respect of mortgage payments for homeowners who lost their jobs.

But what does the introduction of JSA mean and how does this affect the provision we should be making against the consequences of losing our jobs?

The introduction of JSA will further reduce the state benefits of many people who experience unemployment. According to the Department of Social Security over 50,000 people a year will receive lower benefits than under the old system.

Instead of the payments lasting for 12 months, as with the old unemployment benefit, JSA will only be paid for six months automatically. If claimants are still out of work after those six months, they will be means tested to determine whether they are still eligible to receive JSA.

Individuals with assets and capital of more than £8,000 (excluding the home) will not receive any JSA after six months and those with savings between £3,000 and £8,000 will only receive partial JSA benefit.

Secondly, after six months even those who are still eligible could have the benefit withdrawn if it is considered they are not making a "positive" effort to find a new job - for example, turning down a job because the pay is too low would not be justifiable.

Thirdly, the maximum weekly JSA of £47.90 is now lower than the previous unemployment benefit, and for

under 25-year-olds the benefit is even lower at £37.90 a week. There will be no escape from the Inland Revenue either as these benefits are taxable.

In theory anyone facing the possibility of losing his or her job should try to build up an emergency fund in a deposit account which could meet outgoings for at least three months, the average period that an average income earner is out of work.

Another consideration would be unemployment insurance, for example in respect of mortgage payments or loan commitments. Many mortgage lenders now offer mortgage payment protection plans which will pay mortgage interest payments for a year if policyholders lose their job, for a monthly premium of around £6 for each £100 of monthly interest insured. Other policies cover mortgage payments for up to two years and some offer cover for other essential living costs.

However, while such actions would provide some peace of mind, the means testing system for benefits such as JSA does very little to encourage such private provision, and if anything acts as a disincentive.

For example, while the new JSA may prompt more of us to put some savings aside to tide over any unforeseen periods of being out of work, the irony is that those people who do save, with say a Tessa or PEP, will find their entitlement to JSA is reduced once the value exceeds the means test capital threshold of £3,000.

Although the value of any money held in a pension or life assurance policy would not be taken into account, if you are fortunate to receive a lump sum of redundancy payment this would be taken into account through the means test and could disallow any entitlement to JSA after six months.

Furthermore, even those who forward plan and take out unemployment insurance may find that some of the insurance benefit is taken into account

in determining eligibility for means-tested JSA.

Mortgage insurance payments are disregarded by the DSS for the means test if they specifically meet the cost of mortgage interest, but any excess payments which cover such items as endowment and life assurance premiums may not be and could affect entitlement to JSA.

So although the Government is using the "stick" of restricting social security benefits for the unemployed to encourage us to find for ourselves more, there is a severe lack of "carrot" to encourage more private provision through savings or insurance.

However, it is vital that we do not just sit on our hands. If you are made unemployed you should not be discouraged from signing on by the limited benefits on offer, as you may at least be entitled to National Insurance credits which go towards your future state pension entitlement.

Ultimately, private provision, whether through long-term savings or insurance, is the only true way of being assured of some financial protection in the event of losing a job and will offer greater flexibility and choice than relying on the limited state benefits and conditions of the JSA.

The TUC's recent report on the JSA concludes: "Many middle class people are being frozen out of the welfare state at a time when they are more likely to need it." The changes are yet another clear indication from the Government that in future most of us will need to rely on our own arrangements to tide us over the unforeseen events such as unemployment, particularly if we are enjoying average or above-average earnings while working and have built up some savings.

Stephen Ingledew is development director of Frizzell Life & Planning, a subsidiary of the Liverpool Victoria Group.

"Nowadays I always say to myself 'Do you want it, or do you need it?'. If I need it, I pursue it. If I just want it, I don't. Compared to the old days in the Seventies, that's a changed animal."

From 1972 till 1976, I couldn't do a thing wrong. I was top of the charts most of the time, and I found myself wondering what to do next. So I decided to buy a mansion, because that's what it says in the *Elvis Presley Handbook for Upcoming Rock 'n' Rollers*.

I found a lovely property set in the middle of 12 acres. It cost me about £100,000 which, in 1973, was quite a lot of money. It was wonderful. One minute we were in one room in Brixton, and the next we were eating lobster and living in the most beautiful house.

Then I set about saying: "The swimming pool's got to go there. I don't want an Aga, but I want something to an Aga, so that's got to be made..." We didn't even have

any water, so we had to put in a pipe from the main road, 12 acres away. It was a complete disaster.

I used to have a coach that would regularly go to the Playboy Club and say "Gary's having a party tonight, and you're all welcome". They'd all arrive at the house at 3.00 o'clock in the morning.

I was getting plenty of business advice, but I just turned a deaf ear. I did start drinking rather heavily, and I think that was probably the reason. People were trying to tell me - I was employing people to tell me - but I wasn't listening.

It was only when I was in New Zealand, doing *The Rocky Horror Show*, that I got the notice telling me I was bankrupt. Then a friend of mine invited me out in Australia and we rented a house on the beach.

To my amazement they were still taking my American Express card. It still hadn't really sunk in. I thought it must all be a mistake,

because I'd just sold 18 million records.

When I did eventually go back to England I was offered a tour of cabaret clubs. I told them I belonged in the arenas, but they said clubs were all that was going, so I did the tour. They collected the money, and I was paid a living wage. The mansion went to the taxman, the Rolls-Royce had gone. I was living in a rented house.

That's when I started to learn the game. I became a lawyer and an accountant and I started to learn that it makes sense not to spend more than you can earn.

You can spend money while you're working but, if you suddenly stop touring, you can't go on spending in the same way.

In 1980, two punks from America showed up at one of my club shows and, because of the way they were dressed, they weren't allowed in. I thought that was wrong - there must be somewhere else we could play. So we played Norwich University and

that sold out in about an hour. Then we went to three nights at Norwich, two nights at the ball at Christ Church in Oxford, and it just got huge. It started out as nothing, but it went way beyond that.

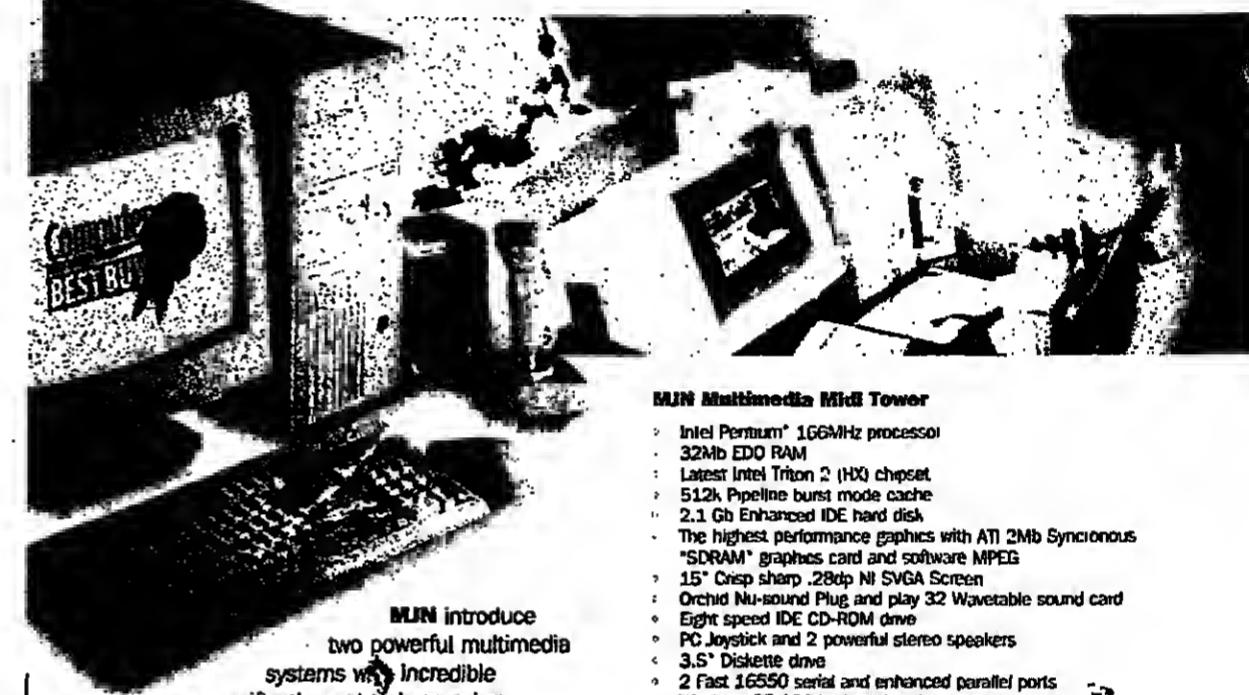
We toured for six years solidly round the universities, and it gave me a huge audience. Then we decided to try renting arena-sized venues ourselves - the first one was the NEC in Birmingham. That was nine years ago, and it really took off. They sell out every year now.

I'm just starting now to become a rich man as a result of taking care of business, but I lost 10 years in the middle of it all. You have to take advice and, every now and again, you've got to get off the merry-go-round and take stock of the situation. I've learnt my lesson - it's not what I want, it's what I need. That's a good one for everyone to remember."

*Gary Glitter was talking to Paul Shulz*

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SCOTTISH WIDOWS

# What these policies really cost you

In part one of a special personal finance investigation, Peter Rodgers and Nic Cicutti name the best companies for pensions and savings

Many people put blood, sweat and tears into buying a home, and far less effort into investing in a pension or other long-term policy from an insurance company. Yet some of the insurance products on offer, especially the pension plans, are likely to be worth as much or more than a family home when they mature. A nice house at retirement is not much good without a decent pension.

In the last few years, there has been a growing realisation that decisions on investment need to be given just as much weight as those about buying bricks and mortar. But much of the information published about insurance products is impenetrable.

To help clear away this fog, the *Independent* asked John Chapman, a former senior official of the Office of Fair Trading, to analyse the investment products offered by insurance companies.

Mr Chapman was the author of a number of hard hitting OFT reports on the life insurance industry. Before he retired this year he suggested a pioneering new method of rating the performance of insurance companies and their products, on which this analysis is based.

It shows which companies are selling the best products. Just as significant, it shows which of them can back their claims about future performance by pointing to good results in the past. The analysis will help buyers of new policies to make a choice, and those with existing investments to check how well they are performing.

The problem with many policies is that if they were not on the market already, nobody would even think of inventing them. They occupy a niche rather like aspirin and paracetamol in the health industry - they are so dangerous and have so many unexpected side-effects that

they would probably be banned from over-the-counter sale if they were launched in the 1990s.

Indeed, with-profits endowment policies, the traditional basis of pensions and other insurance investments, are probably the most one-sided contracts ever sold. Some policies have proved with hindsight to be very good value. But it was certainly not possible to work this out at the time they were bought.

Buyers of with-profits endowments invest their money with no idea of what they are going to get back. There is a guaranteed annual bonus, but the level each year is at the company's discretion, based on its own judgement of performance. Around half the final proceeds are likely to be in the form of a discretionary terminal bonus that the company is not obliged to pay.

It is hard to believe that until 1995, sellers of with-profits endowment policies

also managed to avoid disclosing their charges. Policyholders should know the cost of having their money managed by an insurance company before making an investment.

In recent years, the insurance industry has come up with an alternative to with-profits endowments, in the shape of unit-linked policies for pensions, mortgages and other products. Unit-linked policies are claimed to be much easier to understand and have become very popular.

But they are not nearly as transparent as they are claimed to be. Companies normally declare initial charges of around 5 per cent of premiums and annual charges of 0.625 per cent to 1.5 per cent, but an array of, seemingly, unimportant charges amounted to the smaller print can swell the initial charge on a unit-linked policy to the equivalent of 12 per cent of premiums.

There is a simple reason why charges are the most important consideration in

buying a policy from a life insurance company, whether it be for mortgage repayment, a pension or some other form of savings. This is that the primary determinant of policyholder returns is not investment performance but the total amount of charges levied by the insurers on their customers over the years the policy is in force.

Investment performance is important, of course. But the arithmetic of charges puts it in perspective. The charges reduce the overall yield of a policy by the equivalent of between 1 and 5 percentage points a year. For those cashed in early, the reduction in yield can be 10 per cent a year or more.

Not only are some of these numbers startlingly high, the range between best and worst is also extremely wide, suggesting some companies are charging far too much. The fact is that a company with charges at the higher end of the scale

would need a truly miraculous investment performance over the years to overcome the cost handicap, and beat a rival with low charges. This is why charges are so important in making a decision about what to buy.

Life assurance is heavily marketed. In theory, charges should therefore drop as companies fight for business. But in reality there is very little evidence of this happening, and some charges are actually rising. The reason is not hard to find. The insurance industry has been selling to a public that has not had the information on which to make informed decisions.

The only way to introduce real competition into the industry is therefore to put the spotlight on charges in an easily accessible way, and keep it there.

If customers begin to seek out the lowest cost companies, rather than the ones with the biggest brand names or marketing teams, then charges should fall.

## PORTFOLIO

# ASIA

## Fund of Funds

Fixed price offer closes 1st November 1996

**PORTFOLIO ASIA FUND** is a new unit trust which aims to achieve maximum capital growth from investment in the great growth economies of the Far East. Like the other well-known Portfolio funds it will use the fund of funds principle, aiming to choose the best Asia funds from the best Asia fund managers.

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**THE FUND OF FUNDS ADVANTAGE**  
No one fund manager can master all the companies in all the countries in Asia. India alone has 4,000 quoted shares. But individual funds and fund managers can be very good indeed. Portfolio Asia Fund aims to pick out the best of them, organising them into a tax-efficient portfolio in which changes can be made without incurring capital gains tax: even the best of funds can run out of growth and have to be changed for a better one. The fund can include both UK authorised unit trusts and SIB-recognised offshore funds. As with the existing Portfolio funds of funds, selection leans heavily on the analytical work of Fund Research Limited, the leading specialist in assessing the quality of funds and their managers.

Investors should however bear in mind that the value of their investment could go down as well as up.

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The aim of Portfolio Asia Fund is to achieve maximum capital growth. Income is reinvested net of basic rate tax and reflected in the price of units. Higher rate taxpayers may incur a further liability, but this is likely to be small: the estimated initial gross yield is 0.1%. The fund is exempt from Capital Gains Tax on its internal transactions but unitholders may be liable to CGT when they sell units.

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Schroder Far Eastern Growth, Pacific Growth, Seoul  
HSBC Asian  
HSBC GIC Chinese Equity, Hong Kong Equity, Singapore Equity  
Templeton GS China, Korea  
GT China, India, Orient  
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GAM Asian Funds  
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Portfolio's original Fund of Funds began in December 1989 and is the outstanding fund of funds of the industry. To 31 July 1996 it was the best performing fund of funds since launch, and also over 6 years, 5 years, 4 years and 3 years. (Source: Hindsight). Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance, but Portfolio Asia Fund will be run in the same way by the same people although concentrating solely on Asian funds.

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The initial offer of units is at a fixed price of 50p each until Friday 1 November. The minimum investment is £1,000. During the initial offer period, there will be a 1% discount on all investments of £3,000 or more, 2% from £10,000 and 3% from £25,000. To invest, complete the coupon and send it, with your cheque, to be received no later than Friday 1 November. Applications received after then will have units allocated at the full offer price next calculated after receipt.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Applications will be acknowledged with a contract note and certificates will be sent within 21 days of the close of the offer. From 4 November 1996, units will be valued and dealt in on a forward basis at 10.00 am daily. When units are sold, cheques will be posted within five days of receipt of the renounced certificate.

Pricing will be published every day in the *Financial Times*, *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph*. The spread between bid and offer prices may be varied within the regulations. The initial charge is 6%. The maximum annual charge is 2%, but the actual charge for the foreseeable future will be 1.5%. Any increase would require 90 days notice. Trustee's, Auditor's and Registrar's fees are paid by the fund. Commission is payable to approved intermediaries; rates are available on request.

The underlying funds bear their own charges. The initial charges are likely to be reduced by negotiation. On the existing Portfolio Fund of Funds the average charge is under 0.5%. In some cases annual charges are reduced as well.

Copies of the Trust Deed and Scheme Particulars are available on request from the Manager. Reports will be published twice yearly. The Trustee is Midland Bank plc, Mariner House, Pepys Street, London EC3 4DA. Regulated by IMRO.

The Registrars and Administrators are Premier Administration Limited, 5 Rayleigh Road, Hutton, Brentwood, Essex CM13 1AA. Tel: 01277 227300. Fax: 01277 231694. Regulated by IMRO.

The Manager is Portfolio Fund Management Limited, Christopher West, London EC2M 5TP. Telephone: 071 636 0000; Fax: 071 636 9050. Regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and by IMRO. Members of AIAA.

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Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Full Forename(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Full Forename(s) \_\_\_\_\_

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If you have financial adviser, this application should be lodged through them.

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PORTFOLIO ASIA FUND

### Regular premium personal pensions - unit-linked

|   | Projected ratings | Past performance ratings |
|---|-------------------|--------------------------|
| (X= data not supplied or not yet available) |                   |                          |
| (* Value at 5 and 10 years only)            |                   |                          |
| <b>TOP 5</b>                                |                   |                          |
| Equitable Life                              | A+ A+ A+          | A+ A*                    |
| Norwich Union                               | BAA               | AA*                      |
| Standard Life                               | ABB               | AB*                      |
| Rothschild Asset Man.                       | A+ A B            | XX*                      |
| Gartmore Pooled Pens.                       | AAB               | XX*                      |
| <b>BOTTOM 5</b>                             |                   |                          |
| Abbey Life                                  | C- C- C-          | CX*                      |
| AXA Equity & Law                            | CCC               | B B*                     |
| Albany Life                                 | C- C- B           | XX*                      |
| Skandia Life                                | CCB               | BC*                      |
| Old Mutual                                  | CCB               | XX*                      |

### Stand-alone single premium pensions - with-profits

|   | Projected ratings | Past performance ratings |
|---|-------------------|--------------------------|
| (X= data not supplied or not yet available) |                   |                          |
| (* Value at 5 and 10 years only)            |                   |                          |
| <b>TOP 5</b>                                |                   |                          |
| Equitable Life                              | A+ A+ A+          | BBA                      |
| Royal London                                | A A               | AAB                      |
| Scottish Amicable                           | A A+ A+           | BBB                      |
| Norwich Union                               | AAA               | CAA                      |
| Scottish Widows                             | A B A             | CBA                      |
| <b>BOTTOM 5</b>                             |                   |                          |
| AXA Equity & Law                            | CCC               | ABA                      |
| Guardian Financial                          | BCC               | CXX                      |
| RNP FN                                      | BCC               | XA+ A                    |
| Prudential                                  | B C- C-           | BXX                      |
| Friends Provident                           | C- C- A           | A C C                    |

### Stand-alone single premium pensions - unit-linked

|   | Projected ratings | Past performance ratings |
|---|-------------------|--------------------------|
| (X= data not supplied or not yet available) |                   |                          |
| (* Value at 5 and 10 years only)            |                   |                          |
| <b>TOP 5</b>                                |                   |                          |
| Friends Provident                           | AAA               | A B *                    |
| General Accident                            | BAA               | B A *                    |
| Scottish Provident                          | ABB               | AA+ *                    |
| Sun Life                                    | AB B              | B A *                    |
| Equitable Life                              | A A+ A+           | B C *                    |
| <b>BOTTOM 5</b>                             |                   |                          |
| Albany Life                                 | C C- C-           | B B *                    |
| Scottish Equitable                          | B C- C-           | B B *                    |
| Prudential                                  | B C C-            | C C *                    |
| Guardian Financial                          | B C C             | XX *                     |
| MGM Assurance                               | B C C             | C B *                    |

### Single premium investment bonds - with-profits

|   | Projected ratings | Past performance ratings |
|---|-------------------|--------------------------|
| (X= data not supplied or not yet available) |                   |                          |
| (* Value at 5 and 10 years only)            |                   |                          |
| <b>TOP 5</b>                                |                   |                          |
| Royal Insurance                             | A+ A+ A           | XXX                      |
| Equitable Life                              | A A+ A+           | XXX                      |
| General Accident                            | A A A             | XXX                      |
| Scottish Widows                             | A A A             | XXX                      |
| Friends Provident                           | B A A+            | XXX                      |
| <b>BOTTOM 5</b>                             |                   |                          |
| Prudential                                  | C- C- C-          | XXX                      |
| Legal & General                             | C- C C            | XXX                      |
| RNP FN                                      | B C C-            | XXX                      |
| Commercial Union                            | B C C             | XXX                      |
| Sun Life                                    | B C C             | XXX                      |

### Single premium investment bonds - unit-linked

|  | Projected ratings | Past performance ratings |
| --- | --- | --- |
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# A pound to a penny, coins are collectable

Numismatists are making a comeback, says John Andrew

**C**oin collecting is making a comeback after a decade in the wilderness. "The interest in coin collecting has never been as great since the late 1960s and early 1970s," according to Mark Rasmussen of Spink, the coin dealers.

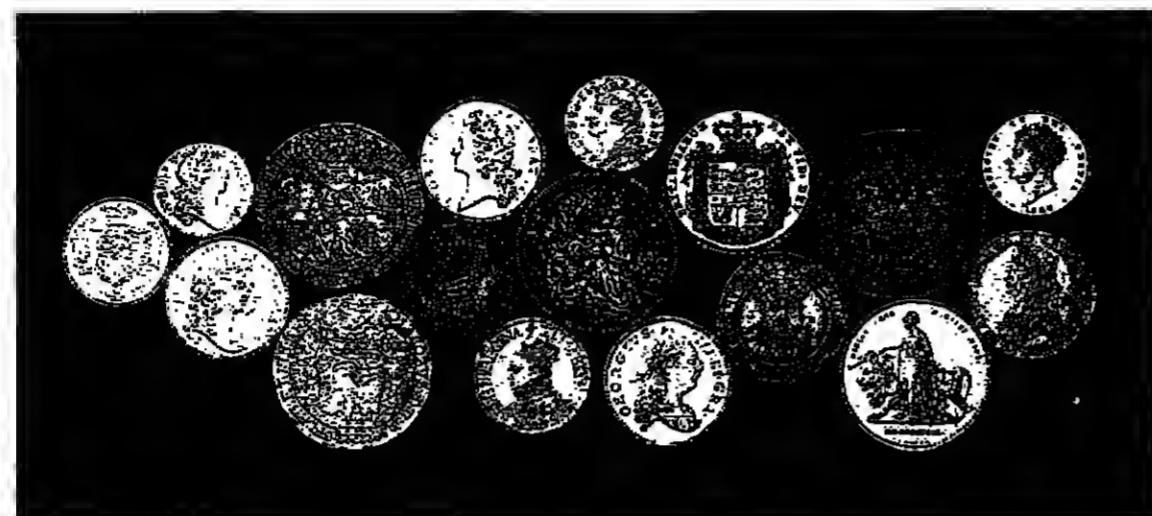
The heyday for coin collecting was the lead-up to decimalisation in 1971 until the mid-1970s. Collecting coinage from change to form date-runs of denominations which were soon to vanish almost became a national occupation. Many of these "casual" date collectors became numismatists proper and began to form collections of historical coins, only to stop collecting in the Eighties.

It was not because the coins themselves lost their appeal, but because they became too expensive to collect. The 1970s was a decade of rampant inflation and it became fashionable to put money into collectables as savings accounts did not pay a real return.

The sharpest rise in prices for British historical coins occurred in 1973-1974 when the stock market was collapsing. Although the coin market paused for breath in the first few months of 1974, it then started on a steady upward climb. Five years later prices for English coins on average had increased 150 per cent.

In the late 1970s there was a further price boom caused by two inter-related factors. There was a great deal of investment buying in the States where, until the Reagan administration stopped the concession in 1980, buyers could invest in collectables via retirement plans and receive tax relief on their purchases.

Even before the purchase of coins for pension funds had stopped, there was the great bullion boom of 1979-1980. On 18 January 1980 silver peaked at \$52.50 and gold at \$835 an ounce. Many coin dealers trade in bullion as an adjunct to their main businesses. The profits they were generating from this activity were substantial. As the coin market was at a peak, the money was channelled into their coin dealing operations. The price for US historical coins rose so sharply and suddenly that



Affordable as well as collectable: a selection of rare and choice British coins from the dealers Spink

European coins looked extremely cheap by comparison.

American coin dealers crossed the Atlantic and invaded the London and continental auction houses. As money was no object, prices for material boomed even further. No wonder at that period, one prominent member of the London coin trade commented, "There are no longer any coin collectors, just investors."

Inevitably the bubble burst, in the first half of 1983, and prices fell. Those who had purchased coins as an investment were disillusioned, while many genuine numismatists had long since stopped making additions to their collections as the specimens they sought were financially out of their grasp.

Even now prices are well below peak levels. In both 1965 and 1966 Mr B purchased two examples of a gold Cromwell broad, or pound piece, at £325 and £350. The pieces, which were both in mint condition, were gifts for his two grandchildren. They were auctioned in February 1982 for £8,200 and £9,200. Today they would be likely to sell for £6,000 each.

In recent years the market for British coins has been stable, with prices on

average being at or marginally above the levels of the mid-1970s. Given inflation over the past 20 years, coins are more affordable now than in the past. This factor, linked with greater disposable incomes, is undoubtedly the main reason why the collectors of the 1960s are returning to the pastime that gave them so much enjoyment in the past.

Although great rarities can cost thousands, for every expensive coin, hundreds of thousands can be purchased for modest sums. Contrary to popular opinion, a coin's value is not influenced by age. A reasonable example of a Roman or medieval coin can be purchased for a few pounds.

The most important determinant of value is a coin's condition, which ranges from mint state to poor. An uncirculated 1887 silver crown bearing the Jubilee portrait of Queen Victoria, would sell for around £60. However, one with considerable signs of wear on its raised surfaces would be worth only £10, while one in poor state would be worth £2-£3. Incidentally, never clean a coin as this slashes its value.

The future for coin collecting looks good and prices will undoubtedly rise. Britain's adoption of a single European

currency would generate considerable new collector demand. However, there is one thing which has been learnt from the past - coins are not an investment. When the financial aspect outweighs the interest in coins for their own sake, that is when the problems will begin again. Coins are a fascinating subject in their own right, for every coin tells a story and a nation's coinage tells its history.

Coinex '96 is organised by the British Numismatic Trade Association and takes place today at the London Marriott Hotel, Duke Street, Grosvenor Square, London W1. It is open from 9.30am to 5pm, admission £2. There will be 68 exhibitors from around the world. Free valuations are offered. For a complete list of BNTA members telephone 0181-398 4290.

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jonathan davis  
investments

**W**hat is the outlook for the world stock markets now that both Wall Street and the London market have passed their latest numerical hurdles - 6,000 on the Dow Jones and 4,000 on the Footsie index? The numbers, though nice round figures, have no significance in economic terms. But they do provide a good moment to stop and take stock of where the balance of argument between bulls and bears now lies.

As it happens, the direction of the markets was the subject of a whole day conference last week by the strategists at James Capel, one of the City's best surviving research-led broking houses. Even allowing for the fact that brokers are paid to be optimistic, they put forward a lot of good arguments to justify why they remain fundamentally optimistic about the current level of the markets.

Capel's have said all along this year that they expect the main stock markets to keep powering ahead and events so far have more than borne them out, despite much scepticism from their rivals along the way. Their forecast is for the London market to rise a further 10 per cent over the next year, despite the inevitable imminence of political worries ahead of the next election. This is how they make their case.

Wall Street may be overvalued if you look only in absolute terms at the main valuation measures such as dividend yield and price-earnings ratio. But once you adjust for the secular decline in long-term interest rates, and for the impact of the business cycle, it becomes much easier to explain. Put another way, American companies have for most of the last 15 years consistently been earning returns on their investment which are comfortably ahead of their cost of capital.

This was not the case for almost the entire period between 1972 and 1982, and again, more briefly, in the 1990-92 recession. The implication is that the dream ticket combination of rising earnings and falling interest rates may still have some way to run, though even Capel's concede that we must now be approaching the end of the current hull phase of the stock market cycle.

The picture in the UK is, if anything,

more positive, according to Capel's. It is not just that the UK stock market tends to lag Wall Street, though it has fallen much further behind the American market in relative terms than the historical averages suggest. More important is that British industry too has been undergoing a positive renaissance. Unlike previous recoveries when most of the profit gains have been driven by higher prices rather than by efficiency gains, this time both profit margins and return on capital have benefited from direct management action. In a low inflation environment, managers have taken full advantage of their new freedom to manage.

As a result, profits have been rising almost twice as fast as the economy as a whole - 12 per cent against 6 per cent in nominal terms last year, and a probable 16 per cent against 5 per cent this year. According to Robert Buckland, the UK strategist at Capel's, investors who look solely at overall market valuation measures and macro-economic figures are in danger of missing out on what is taking place inside the boardrooms of UK plc.

While the overall rate of earnings growth at UK quoted companies may now be slowing down, the gains in real and relative terms continue to be impressive.

Comparing the return on shares with that on gilts and cash, there is no evidence that the market is anything like as overvalued as it was before the 1987 crash. The reason is that the quality of company earnings is higher while the interest rate outlook remains much more benign (though pressure on service sector inflation could push interest rates up next year).

Most surprising of all, perhaps, the Capel's team is still refusing to write off the Tories' chances at the next election. They base this view partly on the fact that the feelgood factor is now starting to return with a vengeance. Consumer spending and the housing market are both reviving, as the Chancellor clearly intends, and consumer confidence, as measured by the polls, is actually above its long-run trend. The Government's problem is that it is not getting the political credit for the economic revival which it would have done if the traditional relationship between economic well-being and the polls had not broken down so drastically in the last four years.

The ERM crisis and the Blair phenomenon are the two most important ingredients in this reversal of fortune. But even here not all is lost. The most recent polls show a sudden narrowing of the Labour party's lead over the Government on two key measures: which party is credited with the greater ability to manage the economy, and which is considered likely to take the most favourable line on tax. The polling gap, conclude Capel's, is certain to narrow over the next few months. Their view is that the next election is far from being lost. If so, that prospect will help the market to overcome its traditional pre-polling jitters.

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**John Hatherly, Head of  
Research, M&G**

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## Best borrowing rates

| Telephone                               | % Rate and period | Max. Fee          | Incentive | Prediction |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| <b>Fixed rates</b>                      |                   |                   |           |            |
| Scarborough BS                          | 0800 590547       | 0.20 for 1 year   | 85        | 0.75%      |
| First Mortgage                          | 0800 080088       | 6.35 to 11/00     | 75        | £255       |
| Northern Rock                           | 0800 591500       | 7.48 to 1/0/01    | 95        | £295       |
| <b>Variable rates</b>                   |                   |                   |           |            |
| Scarborough BS                          | 0800 590547       | 6.5% for 1 year   | 95        | —          |
| Principality BS                         | 01222 344188      | 3.50% to 1/1/98   | 75        | —          |
| Northern Rock BS                        | 0800 591500       | 4.24% to 1/0/99   | 95        | £295       |
| <b>First time buyers fixed rates</b>    |                   |                   |           |            |
| Alliance & Leic BS                      | via local branch  | 2.10 to 1/0/97    | 95        | 0.5%       |
| Market Harbour BS                       | 01858 463244      | 4.49 to 1/1/98    | 90        | £255       |
| TSB                                     | via local branch  | 7.74 to 30/9/01   | 95        | £50        |
| <b>First time buyers variable rates</b> |                   |                   |           |            |
| Principality BS                         | 01222 344188      | 1.00 to 1/1/97    | 90        | —          |
| Greenwich BS                            | 0181 8588212      | 3.49% for 2 years | 95        | £250       |
| Halifax BS                              | 0800 101110       | 5.43% to 31/1/02  | 90        | —          |

| Telephone                      | APR %         | Max. UV | Fixed monthly payments (£3,000 over 3 years)      |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---------|---|
| <b>Unsecured</b>               |               |         |   |
| Direct Line                    | 0141 248 9966 | 13.9 E  | With insurance £112.96. Without insurance £101.33 |
| Alliance & Leicester           | 0115 262 6262 | 14.8    | £114.93   |
| Midland Bank                   | 0800 180180   | 14.9    | £115.82   |
| <b>Secured (second charge)</b> |               |         |   |
| Cyberbank                      | 0800 240024   | 7.5     | Max LTV Advance £3K - £15K                        |
| Royal B of Scotland            | 0131 523 7023 | 8.7     | 5 mths to 25 years                                |
| Barclays Bank                  | 0800 000929   | 9.3/9.6 | 70% £2.5K - £10K                                  |
|                                |               |         | 3 years to retirement                             |
|                                |               |         | 5 to 25 years                                     |

| Telephone            | Account     | Authorised % pm | Unauthorised % pm | APR  |
|----------------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|------|
| Woolwich BS          | 0800 409000 | Current         | 0.76              | 9.5  |
| Alliance & Leicester | 0500 959595 | Alliance        | 0.76              | 9.5  |
| Abbey National       | 0500 200500 | Current         | 0.94              | 11.9 |

| Telephone           | Card Type   | Min. Income     | Rate % pm | APR %  | Annual Fee | Int. free period |
|---------------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------|--------|------------|------------------|
| <b>Standard</b>     |             |                 |           |        |            |                  |
| Co-operative Bank   | 0800 105000 | Advantage Visa  | —         | 0.64%  | 7.90%      | nil 0 days       |
| Robert Fleming S&P  | 0800 829204 | MasterCard/Visa | —         | 0.895% | 11.20%     | nil 0 days       |
| RBS Advanta         | 0800 077770 | Visa            | —         | 0.94%  | 11.90%     | nil 56 days      |
| <b>Gold cards</b>   |             |                 |           |        |            |                  |
| Co-operative Bank   | 0345 212222 | Visa            | £20,000   | 0.473% | 10.32%     | £120 46 days     |
| RBS Advanta         | 0800 077770 | Visa            | £20,000   | 0.54%  | 11.90%     | nil 55 days      |
| Royal B of Scotland | 0172 362890 | Visa            | £20,000   | 1.05%  | 14.50%     | £35 46 days      |

| Telephone       | Payment by direct debit | Payment by other methods |
|-----------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| John Lewis      | 1.39 18.0               | 1.39 18.0                |
| Marks & Spencer | 1.87 24.8               | 1.97 26.3                |
| Sears           | 1.94 25.9               | 2.20 29.8                |

APR Annualised percentage rate. \*B+C Buildings and Contents Insurance UV Loan to value. ASI Accident, sickness and unemployment. E Available to comprehensive motor insurance policyholders aged over 22 years.

N Introductory rate for a limited period.

All rates subject to change without notice.

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## Best savings rates

| Telephone number     | Account       | Notice or term        | Deposit  | Rate %  | Interest interval |
|----------------------|---------------|-----------------------|----------|---------|-------------------|
| Postmen BS           | 01202 292444  | Instant Access        | Instant  | £100    | 4.50 Year         |
| Co-operative Bank    | 0345 252000   | Pathfinder            | Instant  | £5,000  | 4.75 Month        |
| Direct Line          | 0181 667 1121 | Instant Savings       | Instant  | £10,000 | 5.50 Year         |
| Direct Line          | 0181 667 1121 | Instant Savings       | Instant  | £50,000 | 5.75 Year         |
| Teachers' BS         | 01202 867171  | Build                 | Postal   | £500    | 4.80 1/2 Year     |
| Alliance & Leic BS   | 0645 228885   | Instant Direct        | Postal   | £5,000  | 5.40              |
| Bristol & West BS    | 0800 901109   | Instant Access Postal | Postal   | £10,000 | 5.65 Year         |
| Bristol & West BS    | 0800 901109   | Instant Access Postal | Postal   | £25,000 | 6.05 Year         |
| Nottingham BS        | 0115 956 4422 | Direct Reserve        | 20 day P | £2,500  | 6.10 Year         |
| Nottingham BS        | 0115 956 4422 | Direct Reserve        | 20 day P | £10,000 | 6.20 Year         |
| Nottingham BS        | 0115 956 4422 | Direct Reserve        | 20 day P | £25,000 | 6.40 Year         |
| Greenwich BS         | 0181 858 8212 | One Year Term Share   | 1 Year   | £2,500  | 6.50 Year         |
| Wainwright Benson    | 01202 502404  | HICA                  | Instant  | £2,500  | 5.00 Month        |
| Halifax BS           | 0122 325333   | Asset Reserve         | Instant  | £10,000 | 4.00 Quarter      |
| Chase & Co BS        | 0800 717515   | Classic Postal        | Instant  | £10,000 | 4.35 Year         |
| Chase & Co BS        | 0800 717515   | Classic Postal        | Instant  | £25,000 | 4.65 Year         |
| Yorkshire BS         | 0800 378926   | Fixed Rate Bond       | 31/12/98 | £5,000  | 6.60% Maturity    |
| Northern Rock BS     | 0500 505000   | Postal Deposit Bond   | 31/12/98 | £2,500  | 6.75% Year        |
| Coventry BS          | 0345 6655422  | Fixed Rate Bond       | 30/11/99 | £1,000  | 7.30% Year        |
| Shropshire BS        | 0800 603010   | Fixed Rate Bond       | 31/12/01 | £5,000  | 7.55% Year        |
| San Banking Corp     | 01438 744505  | Fixed Rate TESSA      | 5 years  | £3,575  | 7.30% Year        |
| NatWest Bank         | 0800 202400   | Fixed Rate TESSA      | 5 years  | £5,000  | 7.45% Year        |
| Birmingham Midshires | 0645 720721   | Fixed Rate TESSA      | 5 years  | £3,000  | 7.20% Year        |
| Principality BS      | 01222 344188  | Fixed Rate TESSA      | 5 years  | £5,000  | 6.80% Year        |
| West Bromwich BS     | 0121 607 2415 | Fixed Rate TESSA      | 5 years  | £3,000  | 7.45% Year        |
| NatWest Bank         | 0800 200400   | Fixed Rate TESSA      | 5 years  | £5,000  | 7.45% Year        |
| National Counties BS | 01827 747771  | 90 Day Notice         | 30 days  | £25,000 | 6.35% Year        |
| Birmingham Midshires | 0645 720721   | Millennium Bond       | 1/1/00   | £10,000 | 7.50% Year        |
| AGL Life             | 0181 680 7172 |                       | 1 year   | £5,000  | 4.65% Year        |
| Premier Life         | 0800 836200   |                       | 2 years  | £50,000 | 5.55% Year        |
| Pinnacle Insurance   | 0181 207 9007 |                       | 3 years  | £3,000  | 5.80% Year        |
| Pinnacle Insurance   | 0181 207 9007 | </                    |          |         |                   |

# Mobile art with a minimal message

A funny thing happened on my way to the office the other day. I saw a car bumper sticker that made me laugh. It wasn't a great big belly laugh, more of a quiet chuckle. But it reminded me that these days the subtle art of bumper sticker humour – like clever graffiti – is slowly being lost. (OK, if you must know, the bumper sticker said: "A friend in need is a pain in the arse" – which maybe says as much about my generosity to friends as it does about my sense of humour.)

The funniest car stickers these days don't actually mean to be funny at all. They're funny because they're naff. Does anybody really take seriously a car sticker which says "Warning: Show Dogs in Transit"? What exactly are you being warned of? Might one of the show dogs jump out of the car and savage the driver of the car following? Do the show dogs affect the driver of the car, as they slobber all over him or her? Or do these pedigree hound owners expect us to take special care with our driving because their car carries show dogs, not people?

I am reliably told that in fact the latter explanation is the correct one. To confirm this, I noted a few years ago, when I worked near Earl's Court, that an amazing number of Crufts

entrants displayed just such a sign. I asked one, who drove a Volvo estate, why he had the sign. "Because my dog means more to me than anything," he replied. I felt terribly sorry for him. But I still thought the sticker funny.

Mind you, new parents are often not much better. "Warning: Baby On Board" is another one of my favourites. While babies are indubitably worth more than show dogs, why precisely do cars carrying them need to display warnings? True, cars carrying babies are often driven badly, as pre-occupied daddies or mums turn around to check on junior's health. And babies can be sick quite suddenly, necessitating a quick and unscheduled stop from the hapless driver to mop up the puke.

No, wrong again. I am reliably informed that most drivers who display such warnings – as with dog lovers – expect special courtesy because their cars are carrying babies. Again Volvo estate owners seem especially keen to such bumper sticker humour. (Which reminds me of my favourite sticker on a motorcycle: "My other bike is under a Volvo".)

Besides, whenever you exholt people not to do something, they do it. Van drivers, as always, are the worst. You used to regularly see Transit vans tailgating Keep Your Distancers, and you could visibly see how much pleasure the Transit van was getting by his intimidation of the poor, timid motorist.

The funniest car stickers of all used to be in Australia, where I was brought up. The Aussies are not renowned for their subtlety: they call a spade a bloody big shovel.

When I was a kid learning to drive in the mid-Seventies, the favoured transport of young and rebellious men were panel vans. In essence, these are big vans painted garish colours, luxuriously trimmed and boasting big V8 engines. Their like has never been seen in Britain.

Few things used to frighten the parents of Australian teenage daughters more than

"Keep your Distance!" was one of the most popular pieces of rear-windscreen art in the late-Eighties, as many people got obsessed by tailgaters. Using them was stupid. To start with, you could only read them by getting too close.

Panel vans usually had plushly trimmed rear cargo areas, often with double mattresses and hi-fi. They often travelled nose-down, partly to give them an aggressive, predatory stance. Also, at a drive-in movie, it helped the view, as Bruce and Sheila lay prostrate watching the film through the open tailgate, often imitating the sex scenes (I'm not joking).

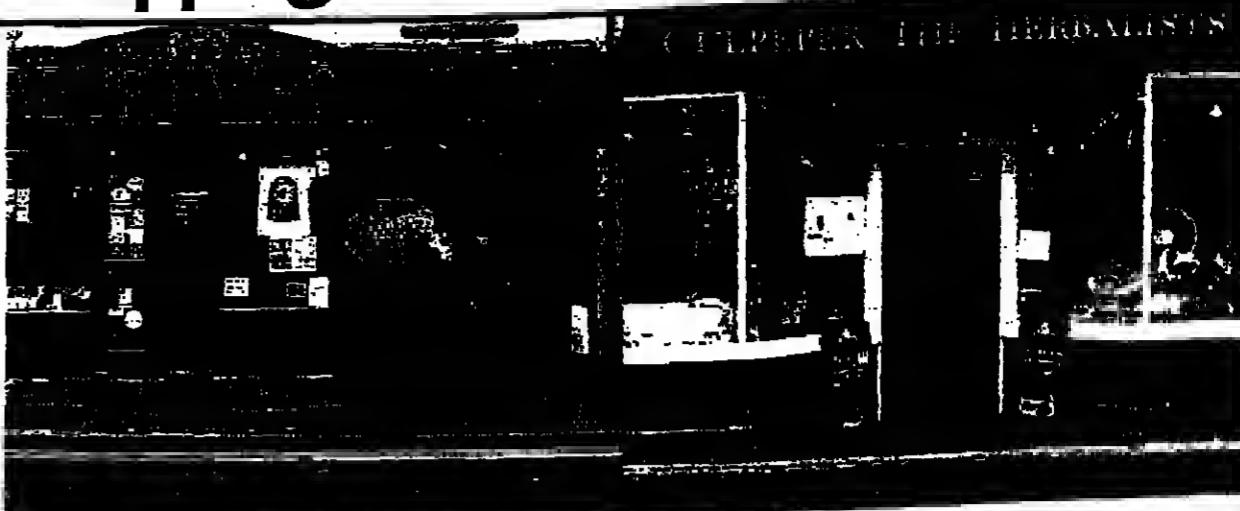
Panel vans had another advantage when going to the drive-in movies. If Sheila's parents had locked her in the bedroom that night, Bruce could always fit about eight in the back. If Bruce was lucky, they'd get in without paying. (Although the groaning, heaving rear suspension at the entrance gates sometimes gave the game away.)

Panel vans used to carry many stickers. It was part of the automotive jewellery of these ludicrous vehicles, along with big alloy wheels, wide tyres and extra chrome-work. But there was one sticker which stood out from the rest. It said: "Don't Laugh. Your Daughter Might Be Inside."

With the sight of a boyfriend heading up the driveway in a panel van. This is not surprising. Their nickname was "f-trucks". Everybody called them that. And for good reason.



Gavin Green



# Spendthrift in Canterbury

A shopping tour of the cathedral city

Today sees the start of Canterbury's two week festival of the arts, making it the perfect place to start our fortnightly series of shopping city tours.

Your first view of Canterbury, if you arrive by train, may seem a little depressing: the station sits next to a dual carriageway choked with traffic, and what little you can see of the city looks gloomy and unattractive.

And yet, after London, Canterbury is currently the most visited city in the country. It's probably been on every tourist's hit-list since Chaucer's infamous day trippers pitched up. Although remarkably unspoilt, Canterbury feels plastic and the majority of the shops are there to serve the tourist trade. The high street, which is closed to traffic, must be one of the prettiest in the country and the views down the side streets are definitely picture postcard material, but this only emphasises the city's Disney-esque ambience. Several American tourists were heard to gasp "quaint" and "cute" with fevered awe as they traipsed along St Margaret's street and into Mercury Lane.

The overwhelming impression is of a village not a city, so it is a surprise to stumble across Debenhams, and Boots skulking next to the Cathedral precinct. They are, however, almost unrecognisable having been denied their corporate colours in the name of heritage. C&A, Clark's, Principles, Mothercare, Miss Selfridge and Topshop are all there too, but these highstreet heavies have been corralled in shopping centres like Longmarket and the Marlowe Arcade which crouch discreetly on the main thoroughfares, out of the range of the tourist camera.

Canterbury is perfect for the shopper with a conscience: take a quick tour of the cathedral, or better still organise your trip to coincide with the Canterbury Festival, and you can convince yourself that the true purpose of your visit was cultural, and the shopping merely incidental.

With the times. Take the escalator up to the first floor and step into furniture hell: the Sliderobe display which proclaims itself to be the last word in "Luxury fitted wardrobes", and leather sofas which look like enormous cowpats. The undulating floors in the basement give the place a curious charm, but the proliferation of nick-nacks and gaudy gee-jaws will soon drive you out to the safety of the High Street.

## clothes

In addition to the standard highstreet clothing outlets there are two boutiques selling upmarket labels, and plenty of good secondhand shops stuffed with covetable leftovers from the 50s, 60s and 70s.

### Entrada

22 Sun Street (01227-763 736) This shop sells a good selection of Ghost, Jo Wear and Sara Sturgeon. A bargain basket in the corner contained a couple of slip dresses in Prada-esque fabrics for £22, and a brown silk shirt by Wear for £17. There is also a basket of toys to occupy grizzling children.

## department stores

Do not waste time on shops you can visit in any other city, it's far better to have a quick wander round the local one-offs.

### Nasons

46-47 High Street (01227-456 755) Every City has its 'Nasons' – the local department store that failed to keep up



# bazaar

## checkout theodore's bear emporium

### good thing

Children's drawings on pillowcases, from £36.50

What is it? Theodore's Bear Emporium, is a tiny whitewashed corner shop which occupies next to Mortlake station, in south west London. Built as Queen Victoria's waiting room, the building is now filled with teddy bears and all things teddy-related. Next Monday owners and bear fanatics, Karl and Sheila Gibbons will be celebrating the 75th birthday of one of the most famous teddies of them all – Winnie the Pooh.

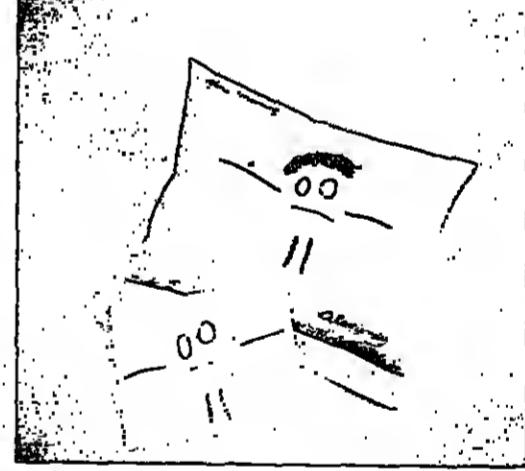
Stock: Mainly collector's teddies – such as those by Steiff, and one-off artist-designed bears like the ones made by German artist Marie Robischon. You'll find something in every conceivable colour, size and theme: pirate bears, cheeky lacy bears and Ascot-dressed teddies.

Who shops there: This is a popular haunt with serious collectors. Theodore's Bear Emporium has cultivated a reputation for being the Hard Rock cafe of the teddy bear fraternity – anyone with a serious commitment to teddy bears will visit at least once.

Buy of the year: Limited edition of Pooh's Tree House. Daintily illustrated boxed sets of Pooh and his forest friends Piglet, Tigger, Eeyore, Kanga and Roo, £199 a set.

Worst buys: The mass-produced souvenir bears – you would probably get them free with something a day away.

Don't miss: Thrice-yearly teddy bear parties held for regular customers. And make sure you sign-up for your copy of the shop's quarterly *The Growler* which lists the dates of all the international teddy bear conventions.



The Monogrammed Linen Shop, call 0171-589 4033

## mad thing



Chocolate pints, 99p, Tesco

Basics first: these chocolates are shaped like pints of beer – complete with a head of white chocolate. Good chocolate is nice whatever its shape. But the saucy postcard packaging is another matter. It features a ludicrous pub scene of cleavage and gawping. The bloke is beside himself, he can't touch his drink – which is presumably why Tesco have made these for him. Wey-hey, new-ladism on the supermarket shelf.

## sure thing



Wicker laundry baskets snag your tights, fur up with dust and can't be cleaned. Not so this smart, simple and functional laundry bag from IKEA. The unfinished beech frame supports a detachable canvas sack which can be thrown in the wash along with your dirty clothes. John Lewis stocks a variation on this theme and Habitat have something very similar in their current catalogue, only it's twice the price.

For your nearest IKEA, call 0181-208 5600

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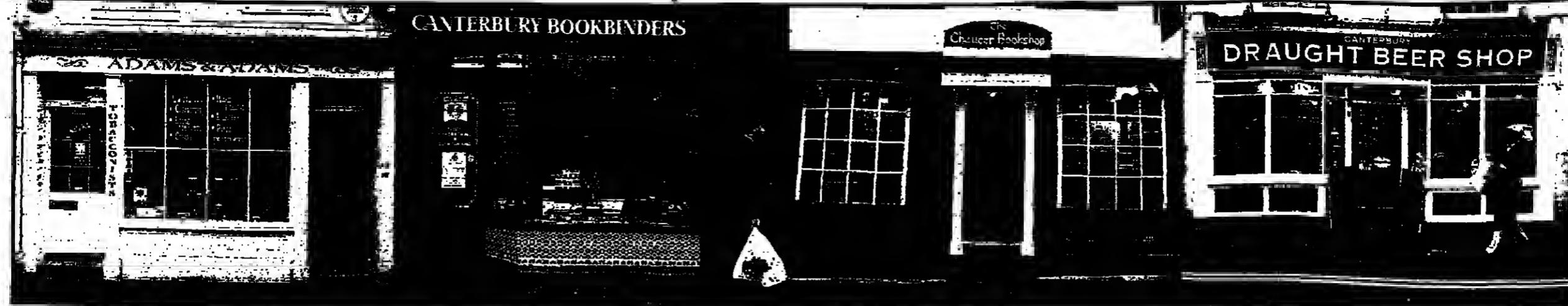
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**Sarah Smith**  
32 Palace Street (01227-769 315). Stock is chosen for its wearability, the emphasis being on understated chic. Along with the big names like Cerruti and John Rocha, there are a number of lesser knowns such as two French labels, Tchao and Philippe Adec, and beautiful knitwear by young Scottish designer, Sara Duncan. There is also a good Marina Rinaldi range which goes up to size 20.

**TT Clothing Co**  
46 Palace Street (01227-781 720). Very well priced second hand clothes in good nick. Chinese dresses, £38-£78, leopard skin coats, £38 and bright feather boas, £15. Masses of suede jackets and funky 70s stripey skimpy rib tops. Plenty of mirrors so you can shimmy into whatever takes your fancy without having to wait for a changing room.

**Golding Surplus**  
25 Palace Street (01227-787 899). Fantastic selection of army surplus gear, khaki T-shirts with stars £5.99, old army boots start at around £25 and faded boiler suits £6.00. Green, standard issue army shirts start at £2.99 and trousers from £11.99. A full guardsman's uniform £7.50 and Second World War leather jerkins with blanket linings are a bargain at £29.99 as long as you're built like a house, enormous seemed to be the only size available.

**Phase Eight Clearance Shop**  
11 Butchery Lane (01227-786 581). Excellent reductions on last season's leftovers, seconds and returned stock. Chunky knitted sweaters in burnt orange and navy, with tiny, easily repaired faults are a snap at £20, but will set you back £39.99 if you buy them from other Phase Eight stores. There is always a good selection of skirts, dresses, jackets and suits whatever the season.

### antiques

You will find the highest concentration of antique shops along Palace Street, known locally as the King's Mile, because its mix of up-market clothes shops and antique shops is reminiscent of London's King's Road. The tourist office on St Margaret's Street has an Antiques Trail leaflet which will guide you there.

**Conquest House Antiques**  
17 Palace Street (01227-464 587).

This is the largest of Canterbury's antique shops and has the most spectacular premises: the main hall complete with pilgrim gallery dates back to the 14th-century and sits on a Norman undercroft which was built in 1080; the front building is, in manager Bill Horn's words "quite a modern addition" having only gone up in 1620. Mr Horn is only too pleased to tell visitors about the shop's rich history: rumour has it that the four knights who killed Thomas a Becket slept here on December 27th 1170, the night before the murder. Bloody tales aside, Conquest House has a good selection of Georgian and Victorian furniture.

**Saracen's Lantern**  
9 The Borough, (01227-451 968). Although not included on the Antiques trail, Saracen's Lantern is worth a visit. They currently have a good selection of Victorian ink wells, £10-£180 and lots of corkscrews, £8-£58. Glass-fronted cabinets and shelves are laden with china, glass, small silverware, Sheffield plate, tea caddies and curios from the mid 19th-century through to the 1930s. A tiny back room is packed with books.

### bookshops

**The Chaucer Bookshop**  
6 Beer Cart Lane (01227-453 912). Like all good second-hand book shops, this is browser-friendly. You get a warm

welcome as you come in and are then left to trawl the shelves at your leisure. A good selection of local history books.

**Canterbury Bookbinders**  
66 Northgate (01227-452 371). The walls of this tiny shop are covered with old bookplates, rescued from the flyleafs and covers of books brought in for re-binding and restoration work. The workshops, where books and magazines are being bound, can be spied through an archway at the back. Students come here to have their theses and dissertations bound.

**accessories & gifts**  
Quite how the good citizens of Canterbury manage to sustain even one shop devoted to highly scented, crudely carved novelty candles is a mystery; yet this mini city boasts a candle emporium on almost every corner.

**Clementoni & May**  
2 Palace Street (01227-764 507).

This is the place to go if you must indulge in floating candles. Here you can buy bags of glass beads, large glass bowls and all manner of smelly, flower-shaped night-lights. They also stock loads of potpourri: pick and mix your own, £1.45 and £2.45.

**The Bead Bazaar**  
13 Orange Street, (01227-458 080). Hidden at the bottom of Orange street, Julia Knowles reckons that not many local people are aware her shop's existence, although it has been doing brisk business for a little over a year. Customers buy beads for their own creations, while others select them for Julia to make up. Julia also offers a re-stringing service, a single string of knotted pearls will cost about £10.

**Christina & Co**  
20 Orange Street, (01227-765 301). Upstairs at Christina & Co it's always Christmas, trees are laden with decorations and shelves and tables display festive nick-nacks. Downstairs is a specialist gift shop aimed at the collectors' market. Here you can find limited edition teddy bears, the Little Souls range of porcelain collectors dolls from America (£150-£350), and the Lizzy High range of wooden dolls. Customers are Christmas addicts, people searching for Christening presents and collectors.

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**The Merchant Chandler**  
4-6 Orange Street (01227-762 644).

Many of the customers appear to be students buying up cheap and cheerful rag rugs (£9.99), bed spreads (£16.99) and cushions (£4.99), presumably to transform dull digs. The back of the shop is devoted to baskets in every conceivable shape and size and at the front there is a candle section in keeping with the local obsession.

### food & drink

**Canterbury Wholefoods**

16 The Borough, 01227-472 288. A cheery brightly lit organic and vegetarian warehouse stocked with plenty to keep even meat eaters happy. A wide range rice includes Thai Scented (£1.98 per Kg) and Japanese (£2.50 per Kg). Loads of dried fruit and large sacks of nuts. Several shelves are devoted to fair trade goods and the fridge is filled with Cheatin' chicken and Veggie Pastrami.

**Canterbury Draft Beer Shop**

83 Northgate, 01227-472 288. Martyn Hillier's shrine to beer is the only place in South East Kent selling beer as you might drink it in the pub, draft, that is - straight from the barrel and into the bottle. A pint of Fullers ESB will cost a mere £1.49 from Hillier, and somewhere between £2.20 and £2.50 in a local pub. In addition to the two-five draft beers available, Hillier stocks around 200 different bottled beers from the UK, Belgium, Germany and South Africa.

Adventurous oon-beer drinkers should try a little something from one of the local vineyards: Staple St James £4.79 or Chilham £3.99.

### Specialist shops

**Culpepper Herbs and Spices**

St Margaret's Street (01227-451 121).

Culpepper, well known for its wide range of herbal remedies, bath oils and soaps, is also a good source of culinary herbs and spices: cinnamon sticks are 50p a bundle, and packets of outmegs, 50p. Four different types of real vanilla extract - Indonesian, Tahitian, Mexican and Madagascan - are recent additions. Best buys for foodies are the fantastic curry kits which include a new ginger and hoisin sauce, and can be made to order.

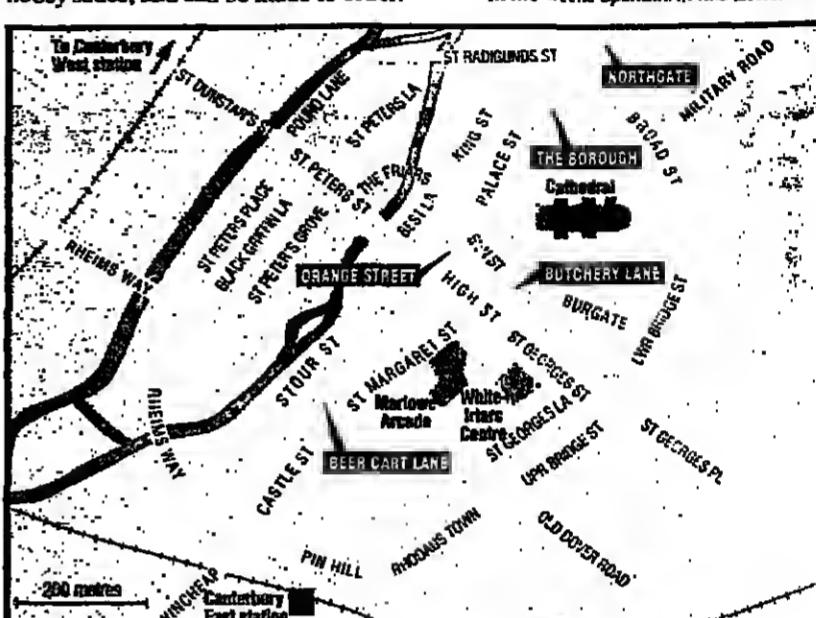
On the aromatherapy front £18.50 will buy you an aroma fan and two essential oils. Various oils are too expensive to have on display. Rose oil, for example, costs a cool £145 for 14ml. The price reflects the fact that you need 30 rose heads to make one drop of oil.

**Adams & Adams**

Palace Street, 01227-786 288.

The air in this tiny tobacconis is heavy with unexpected scents: black cherry, cherry vanilla and Coffee caramel. These heady smells waft from a cabinet filled with jars of flavoured tobacco (£3.60 for 25g). Good selection of American cigarettes and some handmade pipes.

In two weeks Spendthrift hits Leicester



The Canterbury Festival Office: 01227-452 583  
Canterbury Tourist Office: 01227-455 600

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Fax: 0171 293 2505

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Books

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**"People laughed when I offered to explain how to conquer 9 out of 10 illnesses without money or doctors."**

It may sound too good to be true - but it is true! There is a doctor-approved secret which will show you how you can, for the rest of your life, easily conquer 9 out of 10 illnesses without spending money or seeing a doctor.

Most illnesses can be dealt with without pills or medicines, specialists, acupuncturists, hypnotherapists or pills from the chemist - and without exposing yourself to hazardous and uncomfortable side effects.

We have just published a new edition of "Bodypower" - the sensational book by Dr Vernon Coleman which hit the Sunday Times bestseller list and the Bookchart chart too. This fascinating book, reprinted 14 times in the UK and sold in just about every country in the world, shows exactly how 9 out of 10 illnesses can be conquered without seeing a doctor.

**Still not convinced? .. read on for more evidence**

If you think our claims for Bodypower are difficult to believe read what some of the many reviewers had to say:

"One of the most sensible treatises on personal survival that has ever been published. It sets out, in the simplest language, an enormous amount of knowledge in the easiest possible way" - (Wednesday Evening Post)

"Don't miss it! Dr Coleman's theories could change your life .. the revolutionary way to look better and feel younger" - (Sunday Mirror)

".. a self help manual for maintaining or regaining health using your own resources. Vernon Coleman presents his evidence with clarity and evangelical fervour" - (The Good Book Guide)

"There are plenty of good books on healthcare ... I'd recommend Bodypower" - (Woman's Own)

"Arm yourself with a copy of Bodypower - it could make stress a thing of the past" - (Woman's Weekly)

"Despite my own medical training and knowledge of nature's devices, Dr Coleman made me think again" - (BBC World Service)

"marvelously succinct ... refreshingly sensible" - (The Spectator)

Vernon Coleman is the UK's leading medical author and campaigning journalist. He has a string of bestsellers to his name and his books are sold in their millions around the world. He scour the world's medical journals and libraries to bring you invaluable information that could dramatically improve the quality of your life. Here are extracts from just a few of the many thousands of readers' letters sent to this office:

"It is lovely to have someone who cares about people as you do. You tell us such a lot of things that we are afraid to ask our own doctors" - (E.C.)

"I greatly admire you no nonsense approach to things and your acting as champion of the people" - (L.A.)

"I admire your forthright and refreshingly honest way of expressing your views and opinions ... bless you for being a light in the eternal darkness" - (B.O.)

"If only more people in the medical profession were like you it would be a much nicer world" - (G.W.)

"The man is a national treasure" - (What Doctors Don't Tell You)

"A godsend" - (Daily Telegraph)

"Britain's leading healthcare campaigner" - (The Sun)

"Dr Vernon Coleman is one of our most enlightened, trenchant and sensible dispensers of medical advice" - (British Medical Journal)

"The Observer"

We are convinced that Bodypower will change your life and we know that you will not want to part with your copy of this invaluable book. But our guarantee of satisfaction (see below) means that you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. If you want to know the secret of how to conquer 9 out of 10 illnesses without seeing a doctor or spending any money on medical treatments then send your cheque/PO for £9.95 (made payable to Publishing House) to: Sales Office IN45, Publishing House, Trinity Place, Barnstaple, Devon EX32 9HU, UK. To pay by credit card please telephone 01271 328892 Monday - Friday 8.30 - 5.30. We look forward to hearing from you.

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### BIRTHDAY NEWSLETTERS

### Wise 1

### PHANTOM

### What's On

### PILOT

### BOBEN

## Pet corner

### Dog treats

Why do people have pets? The question has spawned many a psychology PhD, but question marks still hang over the habit. Why, for instance, do half the people who dogs put so much effort into trying to deny their very nature?

Dog people divide into two well-defined categories - those who have lost all understanding of hygiene or aesthetics and those who would own a walking, talking living doll if they could buy one. The former cherish grease-stained sofas, hairs in the carpet and flecks of dried gravy on the kitchen floor, and exchange French kisses with the little darling. The other lot, well, a dog or a cat, however endearing its character quirks, is still at heart a ruffian that likes to spend time belly-down in mud and rolling in dead things. Why we pretend otherwise is a mystery.

Still, it's great for trade. A pet, like a baby, opens up a whole new world of shopping. As the valley girl said, the only thing that distinguishes us from the apes is our ability to accessorise. The brotherhood of companies dedicated to meeting this desire grows by the year, and we hand over tens of millions of pounds in pursuit of the perfect place for an animal evolved for sleeping under a hush to lay its head.

One such is the Comfy Pet and People Company of Bradninch, Devon. Their "Waggers" mail-order brochure, a fold-out of accoutrements for the pampered pooch, is terrific: an education in how refined the needs of pet-owners have become. It features five different types of doggy-bed. Their original hollow-fibre cushion (£18.50-£43.50), first made by owner Carolyn Skinner six years ago, has been joined by a "snugger" (£10-£16), an elasticated fleece which turns any box into a bed, a plethora of basket liners, a car boot-shaped duvet (£19-£30) and one on legs in case Lambkin is bothered by drafts. Oh, and there's also the tunnel (£25.50-£34.50), a mattress-and-duvet combo for Rambo to crawl into.

There's more. The presentation, and the greens, navys and tartans of the products, is suggestive of country living, though one gets the feeling that much of the appeal is to the twisted urban soul. There's a brilliant Dri-bag (£11.95-£27.95), a sewn-up towel into which you zip Rover when he's damp and stinky. Waterproof bed-liners protect the hollow-fibre "if your dog is wet, muddy, incontinent, in season or sick". We don't lock Bonzo in the garage these days. Some things - a flea collar made to look like a Country and Western bandana (£4.50) - are just plain daft, and some are witty. Top five is the catnip toy doll for chewing, clawing and beating up, though the joke will probably be lost on Tiddles.

Phone them on 01392 881285 if you fancy a waxed cotton whipper coat to go with your Barbour. If you don't, you're probably happily rubbing Lassie down with the towel you'll be using later when you get out of the bath.

Serena Mackesy

## Six of the best hats and scarves



1



2



3

1 Ski-de hat, Lucy Barlow £28 and M&S scarf, £12. Look cooler than a snow-boarder in Lucy Barlow's ski-tie hat with "Snow" logo. Made from ultra fashionable bouclé wool it comes in ink blue, black, cream and brown. Marks & Spencer have a great range of winter warmers. This soft bouclé scarf comes in charcoal and grey. Lucy Barlow, 0181-968 5333; M&S 0171-935 4422.

2 Stone and cream scarf, £38 and hat, £34. Jigsaw. Jigsaw have gone for a very Seventies look with woolly hats and pom-pom scarves. Chunky cream and stone wool hat £34, scarf £38. Call 0181-878 8443 for branches.

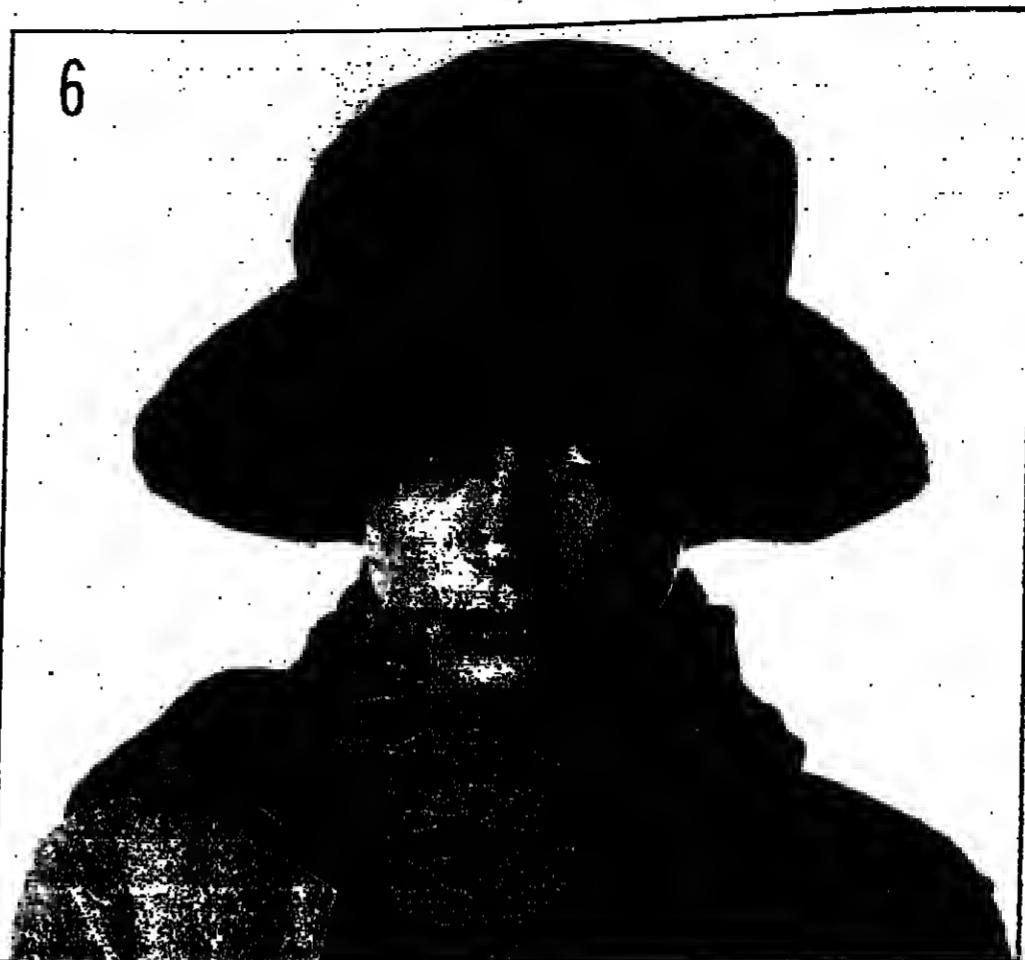
3 Chenille hat, £12, and scarf, £7. Bhs. Another fabric that you can't be seen without this season is chenille and you will find plenty of it at Bhs. This matching hat and scarf in deep blood red are good value and feel wonderfully soft. Call 0171-262 3288 for branches.

4 Animal print hat, £55, L K Bennett and scarf, Accessorize. If you really want to be one of the herd team up LK Bennett's sleek Friesian hat with a gorgeous collar-cum-scarf from Accessorize, these are also available in leopard and zebra. LK Bennett, 0181-947 2038; Accessorize, 0171-313 3000 for branches.

5 "crusher" hat, £19.99 and Scarf £24, Accessorize. Whatever you, or the weather does to it this winter, "crusher" hat will hold its shape. Double the chenille with a cosy woven scarf in matching beige. Accessorize, 0171-313 3000 for branches.

6 Large, chocolate brown fur hat, £55, LK Bennett, scarf, £24.99, Accessorize. Chocolate is the colour this season and this fur hat from LK Bennett, with its thick sumptuous fur and generous height, is the Black Forest gâteau of warm winter hats. Combine this with one of Accessorize's velvet scarves. LK Bennett, 0181-947 2038.

Stylist: Rose Hammick  
Photographs: Tony Buckingham



6



4



5

## Two FREE magazines

### 10 titles to choose from

If our great new listings guide hasn't tempted you to charge off to the cinema, gallop off to a gallery or tune in to the TV, then maybe we can entertain you with our great free magazine offer.

We've joined forces with COMAG Magazine Marketing to offer readers of *The Independent* and the *Independent* on Sunday up to two free magazines from the selection of 10 great titles shown below. Each day, we will be focusing on a different one to give you a flavour of what's on offer and to help you choose the titles to suit you. So to enjoy up to £7.25 worth of great free reading all you have to do is follow the instructions below.

#### How to qualify

• Numbered tokens will be printed in *The Independent* and the *Independent* on Sunday each day from today until 21 October. Today we print Token 1.

• Simply collect four of these, ensuring that they are all

differently numbered, and attach them to one of the application vouchers published in *The Independent* on 15, 19 and 21 October.

• Complete the application voucher indicating which magazine you would like and present it to your nearest magazine retailer.

• You may claim a second free magazine by collecting a second set of four differently numbered tokens and attaching them to a second application voucher.

In the unlikely event that your chosen magazine is not available from your retailer, please be prepared to select an alternative title. The closing date for claiming your free magazine(s) is Thursday 31 October 1996.



Arena  
Arena is  
simply Britain's  
most  
fashionable  
magazine for men

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award-winning  
photography and  
first-class  
journalism, Arena offers a  
complete lifestyle guide for  
the modern man:  
fashion, sport,  
motoring,  
music, travel books, and -  
how could we  
forget - sex. Often copied  
but never  
bettered, Arena features the  
finest fashion pages, the  
funniest and most  
incisive writers, and the  
sharpest design.



Blah Blah Blah  
Pan-European, pre-millennium, post-pop, tongue-in-cheek... it is, are you?

DJ  
The underground dance and club culture magazine

The Face  
The Face is the most fashionable magazine in the world

Fortean Times  
The journal of strange phenomena

Gardens Illustrated  
The art of gardening

Gramophone  
The best classical music magazine in the world

Health & Fitness  
Everything you need to know about a healthier and fitter lifestyle

Period House  
"New ideas for homes with character"

Viz  
Britain's funniest magazine\*  
(\*Manufacturers estimate)

THE INDEPENDENT

INDEPENDENT  
ON SUNDAY

Terms & Conditions  
1. This offer is available to residents of the UK only.  
2. Maximum of 2 free magazines per household.  
3. To qualify for the offer, applicants must collect 4 differently numbered tokens and attach them to a completed application voucher.

4. If you have a Starter Token from Time Out, it can be used as any numbered token, but only one Starter Token can be used to make up your token collection.  
5. Tokens and completed application vouchers must be exchanged at magazine retailers by 31 October 1996.  
6. Only tokens and application

vouchers printed in *The Independent* and *Independent* on Sunday are valid.  
Photocopies of tokens and application vouchers are not acceptable.  
7. The offer is for one free magazine per correct application. The magazine must be selected from those featured here and listed on the application voucher.  
8. The offer is subject to availability. There is no cash alternative.  
9. The promoters are Newspaper Publishing plc and COMAG on behalf of the magazine publishers. COMAG are the leading third party magazine marketing company in the UK, representing 100 publishers.

THE INDEPENDENT  
Token  
1  
INDEPENDENT  
ON SUNDAY

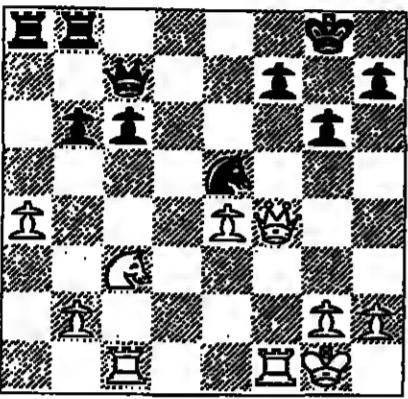
مكتبة من الأصل

## Bridge Alan Hiron

|                        |            |  |  |
|------------------------|------------|--|--|
| E-W game; dealer South |            |  |  |
| North                  |            |  |  |
| ♦18 6 3                |            |  |  |
| ♦10 9 8                |            |  |  |
| ♦K 10 9                |            |  |  |
| ♦J 10 9                |            |  |  |
| West                   | East       |  |  |
| ♦A 5                   | ♦4 2       |  |  |
| ♦K Q                   | ♦A J 6 3   |  |  |
| ♦Q J 6 4 3 2           | ♦Q 7       |  |  |
| ♦6 4 2                 | ♦A 8 7 5 3 |  |  |
| South                  |            |  |  |
| ♦K O 10 9 7            |            |  |  |
| ♦7 5 4 2               |            |  |  |
| ♦A 8                   |            |  |  |
| ♦K Q                   |            |  |  |

The idea of discarding a loser as a loser is familiar to most declarers. It is much more difficult to visualize the possibility of the same manoeuvre for the defenders and, perhaps unsurprisingly, it was missed on this deal.

## Chess William Hartston



And that is how Vassily Smyslov, 75, Miguel Najdorf, 86, Arnold Denker, 82, Laszlo Szabo, 79, Carlos Guimard, 83, Martin Christoffel, 74, and Abe Yanofsky, 71, came last month the contest the oldest tournament in history – and oddly enough they finished in much the same order as they had fifty years ago, with Smyslov winning and Najdorf second.

Miguel Najdorf, the oldest of all the players, brought off the greatest finish. From the diagram position, it is QWhite to play and win in two moves. If you cannot see it, you will meet the answer at the end of this game.

White: Miguel Najdorf  
Black: Arnold Denker  
1 d4 Nf6 13 Nc4 b5  
2 c4 g6 14 cxb6 axb6  
3 Nc3 Bg7 15 a4 Rfb8  
4 e4 d6 16 Ra1 Bf8  
5 Be2 0-0 17 f4 Bf6  
6 Ne3 c6 18 fxe5 Bxe3+  
7 0-0 Bg4 19 Qxe3 Ng4  
8 Be3 Oe7 20 Qf4 Ngx5  
9 Nd2 Bxe2 21 Nxe5 Nxe5  
10 Qxe2 e5 22 Nd5 Qd6  
11 dx5 dx5 23 Rxec6 resigns  
12 c5 Nbd7

At the end, 23...Qxc6 loses to 24.Ne7+, while 23...Nxe5 just leaves the queen to be taken immediately.

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2 c4 g6 14 cxb6 axb6  
3 Nc3 Bg7 15 a4 Rfb8  
4 e4 d6 16 Ra1 Bf8  
5 Be2 0-0 17 f4 Bf6  
6 Ne3 c6 18 fxe5 Bxe3+  
7 0-0 Bg4 19 Qxe3 Ng4  
8 Be3 Oe7 20 Qf4 Ngx5  
9 Nd2 Bxe2 21 Nxe5 Nxe5  
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## The big picture

### The Terroriser

Sun 12.55am C4

Unless, of course, you want to sit through Jonathan Demme's terribly over-blown *Silence of the Lambs*, why not sample the quieter delights – and delights there are – of the resurgent Taiwanese cinema. Edward Yang is its chief auteur – and this is his complex, multi-stranded tale, meshing together the stories of some very different people – a research scientist, a female novelist, a fugitive gang member – through the device of a woman-making prank telephone calls.

**Y**ou probably never saw *Miss Boroch* – but sometime in the early 1970s this now-forgotten masterpiece won the Golden Phallus Award at the International Wet Dream Festival in Frankfurt (every male/piece should have one). Its star was the young Mary Millington, subject of one of this weekend's entries in Channel Four's *Fame Factor* "zone", *Sex and Fame* – the Mary Millington Story (Sat C4).

Now, Millington was a woman so deeply embedded in the 1970s that she should have been born with a pair of fury dice (aptly enough, she chose to kill herself in 1979). She was also Britain's first porno star, a woman with an even firmer grasp on reality than on her clothes. But in the words of her many admirers (there exists a Mary Millington fan club, by the way, staffed by alarmingly young members), she took "pom out of Soho and into Esther".

*Sex and Fame* is a fascinating trawl through Britain's burgeoning porn industry and its friendly reception in the suburbs. And if the similarities with Marilyn Monroe are overstated, Millington certainly managed to notch up (albeit for money)

some bedtime companions nearly as illustrious as Monroe's. The Shah of Persia didn't like any kinky stuff, you'll be relieved to learn.

The Big Question (Sun BBC1) immediately manages to throw up three hostages to fortune for a programme going out at 9.30am. Why, asks presenter Mark Lawson, are we here? Is there anybody out there? And where will it all end? Where indeed. Sir Anthony Hopkins is first up – but for all the purported weightiness of the questions, they serve here only to produce a bog-standard showbiz interview. Warmed up by Lawson with questions about his alcoholism, Hopkins sighs that it's "a well-worn, boring old subject" – as indeed any visit to a newspaper cuttings library will confirm. "Oh... the voice," he almost moans, when confronted with the story of how a "voice" saved him from the bottle.

Deadly Voyage (Sat BBC2) is a behind-the-headlines *Screen Two* drama recreating the voyage of those ill-fated Ghanaian stowaways you might have read about, butchered at sea by the Ukrainian crew who discovered them. One survived to shop them to

the French authorities, in whose country they had docked en route to New York. Joss Ackland plays the drunken former Soviet Navy captain in charge.

Equinox: Killer Bees (Sun C4) is better value, looking at how the fierce African honey bees has colonised all of South America and parts of North America. A sting from one of these charmers is simply a marker for the rest of the swarm – and 600 people have been killed since they were introduced nearly 40 years ago to boost honey production.

The South Bank Show (Sun ITV) shows that although the French may never quite have got the hang of pop music, they are second to none when it comes to a good *chanson*. *Chansons* are the sort of earthy, morally complex ballads made famous by the likes of Edith Piaf, Charles Aznavour and Juliette Greco. As with any art form, there are differences and animosities. Greco tells how she disliked the woman-hating Piaf. Aznavour claims (but not dismisses) Greco as bourgeois. The film itself is a touch choppy, but it's inspired me to put some of the truly extraordinary Jacques Brel on my shopping list.



## The big match

### The Japanese Grand Prix

Sun 4.45am BBC2

Can Damon do it? Just like 20 years ago, the world championship will be decided in Japan, but the parallels would seem to favour Jacques Villeneuve rather than Damon Hill (above). It was the outsider, James Hunt, who overhauled the leader, Niki Lauda, on that rainy day in 1976.



## Television preview

### RECOMMENDED VIEWING THIS WEEKEND

by Gerard Gilbert

# Saturday television and radio

## BBC 1

7.00 Bay City (R) (8806367).  
7.25 News, Weather (9531763).  
7.30 Children's BBC: The Morph Files. 7.40 Robinson Sucre. 8.00 The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest. 8.30 The New Adventures of Superman (2044725).  
9.15 Live and Kicking. Boyzone and the Spice Girls perform in the studio, and astronomer Patrick Moore is in the Hot Seat (S) (44937386).  
12.12 Weather (7475034).  
12.15 Grandstand. 12.20 Football Focus. 1.00 News. 1.05 Motor Racing: highlights of the qualifying session for the crucial final round of the Formula One World Championship from Suzuka. 1.35 Cycling: action from the World Road Championships in Lugano, Switzerland. 1.50 Racing from Ascot: the 2.00 Autumn Stakes. 2.10 Motocross: action from the Dunlop Masters at Farleigh Castle in Wiltshire. 2.25 Racing from Ascot: the 2.30 Wilmot Dixie Cornwall Stakes. 2.40 Motocross. 3.55 Racing from Ascot: the 3.00 Princess Royal Stakes. 3.10 Motocross. 3.30 Racing from Ascot: the 3.35 Wilmot Dixon Stakes. 3.45 Football Half-Times. 3.55 Boxing: last night's Commonwealth light-heavyweight championship fight in London between title-holder Andy Holligan of Liverpool and Zambian challenger, Femi Aiywala. 4.40 Final Score (S) (19547439).  
5.20 News, Weather (2505831).  
5.30 Regional News and Weather (745367).  
5.35 Cartoon (55270).  
5.55 Children in Need. Terry Wogan and Gaby Roslin launch this year's appeal (S) (748454).  
6.05 Jim Davidson's Generation Game. Brian Conley guest stars (S) (884819).  
7.05 Due South. Last in series (S) (760812).  
7.50 The National Lottery Live – the 100th Birthday. The guest is violinist Vanessa Mae (S) (885589).  
8.05 Casualty. A chlorine spillage at a swimming pool busies the TV docs (S) (363744).  
8.55 News and Sport, Weather (Followed by National Lottery Update) (134102).  
9.15 *Lust for Murder* (Nathaniel Gutman 1993). Two couples go on holiday together. Wife nut, one starts an affair with husband number two, kills his wife and tries to blame the murder on her own husband. If you follow (4103560).  
10.40 Match of the Day. Manchester United v Liverpool at Old Trafford is the main event (S) (33686270).  
11.50 *They Think It's All Over*. Andy Gray and Jo Brand are the guests from last Thursday (R) (S) (885763).  
12.20 Top of the Pops (S) (7472858).  
12.55 *April Fool's Day* (Ferd Winton 1986 US). An heiress invites old college friends to stay at her luxury island over the April Fool's weekend. Then, as they say, the killings start (4109023).  
2.20 Weather (8118655). To 2.25am.

REGIONS: Scot: 5.35pm Auntie's TV Favourites. 9.15 Children in Need. 9.25 Film: Lust for Murder. 10.55 Sportscene – Match of the Day.

## BBC 2

6.05 Town Portraits. Bishop Auckland (R) (3835725).  
6.15 Cold Yearning (R) (6482980).  
7.05 *It's a Mad, Mad Day* (Oswald Mitchell 1941) A Broadway star, Ann Todd, returns home to Britain to help the War effort (2451676).  
8.20 Open University: How We Study Children (9212812). 8.45 Four Towns and a Circus (818928). 8.50 A Tale of Two Capitals – Paris and Rome (7243486).  
10.00 *Chamakya* (S) (1432164).  
10.35 Network East (S) (9170357).  
11.20 Bollywood or Bust? (S) (3182164).  
11.50 *Madeline* (David Leon 1949 UK). Ann Todd again, in the second of two films she made with her then husband, David Leon. She plays a young woman who comes under suspicion when the Frenchman with whom she has been having a secret affair, is found poisoned (46205763).  
1.40 Film 96 with Barry Norman (S) (14757541).  
2.10 *San Francisco* (W S Van Dyke II 1936 US). Lavish MGM disaster movie, culminating in a magnificent recreation of the 1906 earthquake. Singer Jeanette MacDonald, casino owner Clark Gable, and pugnacious priest Spencer Tracy learn how to pull together (793655).  
4.00 *The King and Four Queens* (Raoul Walsh 1956 US). The second Clark Gable film of the afternoon finds him playing a cowboy on the run who plays on the emotions of four women, hoping to discover the whereabouts of \$100,000 from a stagecoach holdup (8136367).  
5.20 *TOTP 2* (S) (9275928).  
6.05 Rhodes. 6.45 (S) (102454).  
7.00 News and Sport, Weather (670909).  
7.15 Assignment: Julian O'Halloran reports from Israel (782034).  
8.00 What the Papers Say (S) (978473).  
8.10 The Untouchable. See: Preview, above (S) (362299).  
9.00 Have I Got News for You (S) (7676).  
9.30 Screen Two: *Deadly Voyage*. See: Preview, above (S) (45831).  
11.00 *The Butcher's Wife* (Terri Hughes 1991 US). Rather likeable low-key romantic comedy. Derril Moore plays a clairvoyant from the sticks who marries a New York girl – her and starts working her magic on his Greenwich Village entourage. With Jeff Daniels (S) (741831).  
12.40 *Motorcycle Gang* (Edward L. Cahn 1957 US). Drive-in mayhem about a motorcycle gang (Followed by Weatherview) (6167961).  
1.55 *The Oklahoma Woman* (Roger Corman 1956 US). B-movie western (4392232).  
3.05 *Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye* (Gordon Douglas 1950 US). Cracking James Cagney vehicle finds him escaping from prison and marrying a beautiful socialite who knows nothing of his past (56410).  
4.45 Japanese Grand Prix. Can Damon do it? Live coverage of the crucial final round of the Formula One World Championship (33956). To 7.00am.

## ITV/London

6.00 GMT. 6.00 News. 6.10 *Mole in the Hole*. 6.30 Professor Bubble. 6.50 *Big Alert*. 7.10 Disney's *Wake Up in the Wild*. 8.20 *Carry On, Girls*. 8.50 *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers* (751258).  
9.25 *News*. MN8 play their new single (S) (2439855). 11.00 *The News*. MN8 again – joined by East 17 and Cilla Black (S) (1623).  
11.30 *The Chart Show* (S) (81980).  
12.30 *Love Bites*. Series looking at romance, relationships and love. This week, why do boys always brag about their conquests? And can you be too fat or spotty to get a girlfriend? (75299).  
1.00 *News and Weather* (8856893).  
1.05 *Local News*. Weather (4303164).  
1.10 *Champions League Special* (K8385265).  
1.40 *Movies, Games and Videos* (5229831).  
2.15 *The Big Money* (John Paddy Carstairs 1962 UK). Incompetent but still a suitably full of courtierly money. Comedy starring Ian Carmichael and Kathleen Harrison (562218).  
3.50 *Guests 2032* (S) (8069831).  
4.45 *News, Sports Results*, Weather (7789657).  
5.05 *London Tonight, Sports Results* (Followed by *LWT Weather*) (1490314).  
5.20 *New Baywatch*. CJ befriends a homeless eccentric (S) (192347).  
6.15 *Gladiators* (S) (976763).  
7.15 *Blind Date* (S) (752974).  
8.15 *Family Fortunes* (S) (269725).  
8.45 *ITV News, Weather, Lottery Result* (Followed by *LWT Weather*) (1490314).  
9.00 *Alright on the Night's Cock-Up Trip*. Avuncular Denis Norden presents 10 brand new TV out-takes (S) (2473).  
10.00 *ITV: The Silence of the Lambs* (Jonathan Demme 1991 US). Anthony Hopkins smacks his lips into superstars as Hannibal Lecter in Demme's highly popular – but, for my money, disappointing – adaptation of Thomas Harris's scary bestseller. (director Michael Mann came closer to the dark heart of Harris's book in his excellent *Manhunter*). Jodie Foster is the FBI agent sent to debrief Lecter for clues about a serial killer. But can she escape with her soul? (5340744).  
12.15 *Funny Business*. Focusing on Harry Hill and the wonderful John Shuttleworth (S) (54961).  
12.45 *The Great American Sex Scandal* (Michael Schutte 1989 US). The lives of 12 average Americans are turned upside down when they are selected to serve as jurors on an embezzlement case that turns into the most sensational sex scandal of the decade. Starring Linda Redgrave, Heather Locklear and Maelchen Amick (415955).  
2.25 *The Chart Show* (R) (7708787).  
3.15 *ITV News Review* (3720139).  
4.05 *Night Shift* (44210771).  
4.10 *Gift* (R) (4573665).  
5.05 *Coach*. One of Haydn's former players develops cancer from steroid abuse (R) (S) (2663416).  
5.30 *News* (17077). To 6.00am.

## Channel 4

6.50 *The Magic School Bus* (R) (S) (9095164).  
7.20 *Really Wild Animals* (8820254).  
7.45 *First Edition* (8698034).  
8.00 *Transworld Sport* (78657).  
9.00 *The Morning Line, Racing tips* (S) (70928).  
10.00 *Gazette Football Italia* (S) (37980).  
11.00 *Blitz* (57744).  
12.00 *Rawhide* (5334560).  
12.55 *Edge of Darkness* (Lewis Milestone 1943 US). Very dark for a wartime morale-raiser; Milestone's movie casts Errol Flynn and Ann Sheridan as resistance leaders in a small Norwegian fishing town. The occupying Nazis are depicted as unmitigating savages by scriptwriter Robert "The Hustler" Rossen (88555706).  
3.10 *Channel 4 Racing* from York. Derek Thompson introduces the 3.15 *Col�ream Guards* Rockingham Stakes; the 3.45 *Cricket* Horses H'cap Stakes; the 4.15 *Corral Sprint Trophy*, and the 4.45 *4 Royal British Legion Insurance Services Stakes* (S) (5592164).  
5.05 *Brookside* (R) (S) (3396909).  
6.30 *Right to Reply* (S) (589).  
7.00 *News Summary and Weather* (567265).  
7.05 *The Great, the Good and the Dispossessed*. Special programme, coinciding with the UN Day for the Eradication of Poverty (who says they don't have lofty aims), looks at the nature of poverty in Britain today, what causes it, and suggests policies to tackle the problem (S) (6632725).  
8.30 *Birds of the Burning Soda*. Africa's Great Rift Valley has lakes that are now bitter alkaline. But one creature, the lesser flamingo, thrives on these soda lakes and millions congregate to form a great wildlife spectacle. Here it is (R) (1034).  
9.00 *ER*. A terminally ill patient begs Greene to help her die (R) (S) (463299).  
9.55 *Father Ted*. A militant feminist singer arrives on the tiny island, just as Ted is preparing to judge the annual Lovely Girls competition (R) (S) (289812).  
10.25 *NYPD Blue*. Sipowicz secretly relocates the corpse of a fellow detective who died with a prostitute in a seedy motel (R) (S) (136454).  
11.25 *Sex and Fame* – the Mary Millington Story. See: Preview, above (S) (351299).  
12.30 *Stairstruck*. As the demand for celebrity lookalikes booms, a look at four people who make a living out of looking like someone famous, including a young Cliff Richard, a Marilyn Monroe lookalike and an Elton John clone (S) (351299).  
12.55 *The Rose* (Mark Rydell 1979 US). Bette Midler has rarely been better than in her first headline movie – playing the young singer burning herself out in the classic rock music mode. Alan Bates is unconvincing as her manager, but there's solid support from Harry Dean Stanton and Frederic Forrest (S) (4494569).  
3.25 *Tales from a Hard City*. Repeat *True Stories* film, and a winner of a Prix Italia, looks at showbiz wannabes from Sheffield (7077787). To 4.55am.

## ITV/Regions

**ANGLO** As London except: 12.30pm *Champions of the Future* (75299). 2.10 *Southwark* (7495522). 2.55 *Arrest* (81731). 6.45 *12.15am Film: The Chase* (95355). 8.00 *First Edition* (8698034). 8.45 *Transworld Sport* (78657). 9.00 *The Morning Line, Racing tips* (S) (70928). 10.00 *Gazette Football Italia* (S) (37980).  
**CHANNEL 3** NORTH EAST/SCOTLAND As London except: 12.30pm *Movies, Games and Videos* (75299). 1.40 *12.15am Film: The Chase* (95355). 3.50 *Arrest* (81731). 5.10 *Channel 3 North East, Full Time* (2399015). 7.00 *Scoreline* (2399015). 12.15am *Ron Doo* (959556).  
**1.00pm** *Business* (6618394). 1.30am *Leeds and Luton* (2224761). 4.10am *Hele Steeler* (9317042). 5.00-5.30am *World of Sailing* (32232).  
**CENTRAL** As London except: 12.30pm *Premier* (75299). 1.10 *TV Sport, Classics* (7672165). 1.25 *Champions League Special* (23990229). 1.55 *Eastern Mix* (14742511). 2.00 *Movies, Games and Videos* (14742511). 2.45 *Arrest* (8173164). 3.50 *Transworld Sport* (78657). 4.15 *Corral Sprint Trophy*, and the 4.45 *4 Royal British Legion Insurance Services Stakes* (S) (5592164).  
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